

THE  
GRADUAL CONQUEST;  
OR,  
HEAVEN WON BY LITTLE AND LITTLE.  
TWO  
SERMONS,

Preached at CARNOCK, July 3. 1727.

*After the Celebration of the LORD's SUPPER.*

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ENCLOSURE

1941



# The Gradual Conquest:

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## S E R M O N

O N

DEUT. vii. 21. *And the Lord thy God will put out these Nations before thee by little and little.*

**Y**OU that have been right communicants at this occasion, you have been upon the field of battle, fighting in the name and strength of the Lord against your spiritual enemies; what victory you have got, I cannot tell; but some may perhaps be saying, "O I find many enemies to be yet strong and mighty; iniquities prevail against me; and I fear I'll never won to the full possession of the heavenly Canaan, there are so many and strong nations of enemies in the way which I cannot get conquered." To such as may be thus exercised, the words of my text may be welcome news; *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little.* We have here God's promise to Israel of old, concerning their being brought to the possession of the earthly Canaan, which you know was a type of the heavenly Canaan; and, lest they should be discouraged by the difficulty of the conquest, so many enemies being in the way, he animates them against the greatest discouragement.

1. If they objected the number of their enemies, and their strength; he answers that objection, ver. 17. 18. he had destroyed greater enemies than these for them; and he that had done the greater, would easily do the less; he that began the work would finish it.

2. If they objected the weakness of their own strength and forces, he answers that objection, ver. 20. 21. Their greatest encouragement was, that they had God among them, a mighty God, and terrible; and if God be with us, if God be for us, we need not fear the power of any creature against us.

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3. If they objected the *slow progress* of their arms, and feared that the Canaanites would never be subdued, if they were not expelled at the first; to this it was answered, in the words of our text, *The Lord thy God will put out these nations by little and little.*

Where you may notice two things, (1.) Israel's *enemies* described; they are called nations, because of their multitude and power. (2.) Israel's *conquest*: *The Lord thy God will put them out before thee by little and little.* Where you may notice both the glorious conqueror, and the manner of the conquest.

1<sup>st</sup>, The *conqueror* is God described by his sovereignty over them, *the Lord*; and by his propriety in them, *thy God*. He it is that fights their battles.

2<sup>dly</sup>, The *manner* of the conquest: he will do it, 1. *Effectually*; he will put them out. 2. *Remarkably*; he will put them out *before thee*. 3. *Gradually*, which is the special thing here noticed in the manner of the conquest, namely, *by little and little*. The same you read, Exod. 23. 29. 30. The wisdom of God is to be remarked in the gradual conquest of his people's enemies; and it is in real kindness to the church, that her enemies are subdued by little and little.

Now, Israel being typical of the church; and the land of Canaan typical of heaven; and Israel's conquest over the nations, their enemies, typical of the spiritual conquest of the Lord's people over their spiritual enemies; and the manner of God's dealing with them for the most part, typical of the way of God's dealing with his people in all ages: therefore, I would deliver to you the gospel of this text, and open it in this one doctrinal observation:

*That as the true Israel of God have nations of enemies in their way to the possession of the heavenly Canaan; so the Lord their God will conquer these nations by little and little.*

I shall endeavour to open and confirm this doctrine in the following method:

- I. Inquire who are the *true Israel* of God.
- II. Speak a little of the *heavenly Canaan*, which they will be brought to the possession of.
- III. Inquire what *nations* of enemies they have in their way. And,
- IV. Speak a little of the *conqueror* the Lord their God.
- V. The *manner* of the conquest his putting them out before them *by little and little*.
- VI. The *reason* of this gradual conquest.
- VII. Make application of the whole.

And

And in all these I shall endeavour as much brevity as possible. Mean time, look to the Lord; that he would give some word with power, and with a blessing.

I. The *first* thing, who are the *true Israel* of God, of whom this promise is made in the mystical and spiritual sense of it. *They are not all Israel that are of Israel.*

1. The true Israel whom he will bring to the heavenly Canaan, are a people whom he hath *set apart* for himself, and separated from the rest of the world, as Israel was. The true Israel are set apart, not only by election from eternity, but by effectual calling in time. As, in the first creation, God separated the light from the darkness, and made the one day, and the other night; so in effectual calling, he separates the elect from others, as light from darkness; he leaves the rest of the world buried in their own obscurity, and makes the others children of light. By effectual calling they get convincing grace; others are left stupid and seared: they get enlightening grace, and others are left in the dark: they get renewing grace, and others are left in their enmity; they get persuading and enabling grace to believe, others are left in their unbelief, and remain children of disobedience and unperfuadableness: *This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.* Hence,

2. The true Israel of God are a people whom he hath brought out of Egypt in a spiritual sense, as Israel was in a temporal; and that with a high hand, and outstretched arm. He hath brought them out of the Egypt of a natural state, and out of the house of bondage; from their natural bondage to sin and Satan, their bondage to the law as a covenant of works, putting them to the hard task and intolerable labour of *doing for life*; a task much worse than the Egyptian bondage of making brick without straw: he hath brought them, I say, out of the house of bondage with a high hand; no power in the world being able to loose their bonds, if the power of a God had not been put forth for that end. They are a people redeemed, not only by the price of the Mediator's blood, but also by the power of his Spirit: by his power he hath begun to plague their enemies, and to drown them in the red sea of his blood, for they overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

3. The true Israel of God are a people acquainted with *travelling in the wilderness*, from Sinai to Zion, as Israel was: I mean, from the law to the gospel; from the covenant of works to the covenant of grace. As Israel at Sinai was amazed at the sight of God appearing in his terrible majesty, and afterwards were brought into covenant with him: so the true Israel of God are a people that have been humbled with the



views of God's holiness and infinite justice in the command and threatening of the law, and been made to flee for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel covenant: they have come from Sinai to Zion, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling.

4. The true Israel of God are a people acquainted with the *conduct of the pillar of cloud and of fire*, as Israel was; I mean, they have gotten the Spirit of Christ to be their guide in the way to Canaan; *if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his*; and if any man have the Spirit of Christ, he is guided thereby, and led into all truth, and out of all the paths of damnable error. There is a leading of the Spirit by a secret invisible hand, and by the means of the word, that all the Israel of God are partakers of; even a voice behind them, saying, This is the way, and all his sheep know his voice.

5. The true Israel of God are a people *fed with manna from heaven* in spiritual sense, as Israel was in another sense; they are a people that eat the hidden manna; that have bread to eat, the world knows not of, even the bread of life that came down from heaven; they live by faith in the son of God; Christ is the Alpha and Omega of their life, the food and medicine of their life, the restorer and preserver of their life; they cannot live without him. The worldling lives upon his riches, the carnal man lives upon his lusts, hypocrites live upon their profession, legalists live upon their duties; but the true Israel of God live in the way of duty, upon Christ himself, as their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. If I have any wisdom, Christ is my wisdom; if any righteousness, Christ is my righteousness; if any holiness, Christ is my sanctification: Christ is my ALL, my life, my strength, my treasure, &c.

6. The true Israel of God are a people acquainted with *wrestling with God for the blessing* as Jacob was, who thereupon called the *seed of Jacob*, that shall *not seek his face in vain*. They are a people, whose life of faith is acted much upon their knees, or in a way of praying in the name of Christ, and in the Spirit of Christ: *praying in the Holy Ghost; this is the generation of them that seek thee, that seek thy face O Jacob's God*. They are always wanters, and that makes them always seekers and beggars.

II. The *second* thing, was to speak a little of the heavenly Canaan that they will be brought to the possession of. I would hold it forth in these four particulars, namely, in its *types, epithets, parts, and properties*.



*1st*, In its types. The types of the heavenly Canaan were manifold. I shall name a few of them.

1. The *earthly Canaan* was a type of the heavenly and celestial Canaan. How magnificently does the Lord speak of Canaan! It is called a *goodly land, a holy land, a land flowing with milk and honey*; yet this land was but a type and shadow of the heavenly.

2. *Paradise* was a type of this heavenly Canaan. Though all the pleasant orchards and comely things in the world were united in one, they could not come that length as to compete with the earthly paradise for pleasure and comeliness, when God placed our first parents there in their innocent state: yet what was it but a faint resemblance of the heavenly paradise? nothing but a shadow of it.

3. The *Sabbath* was a type of this heavenly, happy, and eternal Sabbath of rest. Indeed it is but a restless rest the Lord's people have here; when they rest in the Lord at any time, their rest is soon disturbed: even though they can say at times, *Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*; how soon does the devil, and the ill heart, and the world, disquiet them again? *but there remains a rest, a sabbathism, for the people of God*; when they shall rest from their labour, rest from sin and sorrow.

4. The *tabernacle* was a type of the heavenly Canaan; the Lord's presence filled the tabernacle: O how does his glorious presence fill heaven, and fill all the hearts of the heavenly inhabitants! glorious things are spoken of the earthly Zion; how much more glorious things may be spoken of the new Jerusalem above! But then,

*adly*, We may consider this heavenly Canaan in its *epithets*;

1. It is called a *house*, John 14. 2. *a mansion house, a prepared place. In my father's house are many mansions*; I go to prepare a place for you. O what a noble house is it where glory dwells! what an excellent house will it be when the father of the family will be in the midst of the house, and all his children about him, all his elect gathered together from all corners of the earth; where the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Christ himself the elder brother, and all the younger brethren, will dwell together!

2. It is called the *joy of the Lord. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*. Joy here enters into the believer, but there the believer enters into joy: he enters, as it were, into an ocean of joy; and it is the joy of his Lord Jesus. How great is the joy that our Lord entered into as the reward of his obedience unto death? of which it is said, Heb. xii. 2. that, *For the*

*the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. That same joy the saints are to enter into; In thy presence there is fulness of joy, &c.*

3. It is called *life, eternal life*. Rom. vi. 23. *The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*; life is sweet. A living flie is more happy, by reason of life, than the glorious sun in the firmament. The rational life is yet more sweet; the life of grace is yet sweeter than any of these: but the life of glory is sweetest of all; and this life is eternal; it is life for evermore.

4. It is called a *kingdom, a heavenly kingdom*. 2 Tim. iv.

18. *The Lord shall preserve me to his heavenly kingdom*.

Yea, such a kingdom, that here all the subjects are kings. One said of Rome once, that it was *respublica regum*, a common-wealth of kings; they are all *kings and priests unto their God*: and there all the kings have their crowns, a crown of glory, righteousness, and joy: they will have their thrones; *to him that overcomes, will I give to sit with me on my throne, &c.* They will have their royal robes, their robes of glory, and palms of victory. But again,

3dly. We may consider this heavenly Canaan in its parts. There are especially these four parts of heaven and glory mentioned in scripture, namely, *Vision, likeness, love, satisfaction*.

The *first* part of it is the *vision* of God, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Father, I will that these whom thou hast given me may be with me where I am; to behold my glory.* New cabinets of rich treasure will be opened up to them every moment to eternity.

The *second* part of it is *likeness*, which follows upon the former. 1 John iii. 2. *We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* This is the native fruit of beholding Christ to be thereby brought to conformity to him, 1 Cor. iii. 18.

The *third* part of it is *love*. This follows upon the former. Likeness breeds love even upon earth; then will the saints be made *perfect in love*, 1 John vi. 18. O what flames of love will burn in heaven! every saint will be a flame.

The *fourth* part of it is *satisfaction*, which proceeds from the rest. Psal. xvii. 15. *I will behold thy face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.*

—All this is begun on earth in the heirs of glory. The brighter view a believer gets of Christ, the more likeness; the more likeness, the more love; the more love, the more satisfaction. But, O when there shall be perfect seeing, there will be perfect likeness;

likeness; when perfect likeness, perfect love; and when perfect love, perfect satisfaction and joy: Then *the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come unto Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* Isa. 35. 10.

4thly, We might consider this heavenly Canaan in its *properties*. It is another sort of inheritance than the earthly Canaan.

1. It is a *glorious* inheritance: it is glory itself: yea, an *exceeding great and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. v. 17. God, who is every where present, is there gloriously. To make a weak allusion; the sun in the firmament is in this or that place, by his rays and beams; but in the firmament in a glorious manner; so God is here on earth in his grace, and the rays of his countenance; but in heaven in a glorious way. O there the saints are indeed all glorious within and without both: their bodies glorious, like unto Christ's glorious body, when once they are raised; their souls glorious, because perfect in holiness.

2. It is a *heavenly* inheritance, therefore called a *heavenly kingdom*, as I said, in opposition to earthly kingdoms. There the great King is heavenly, the subjects are heavenly, the work is heavenly, the reward heavenly, the company heavenly, the converse heavenly, all heavenly.

3. It is a *purchased* and *promised* inheritance; called a *purchased possession*, Eph. 1. 14. The crown is purchased, the throne purchased, the robes purchased, and all purchased by the blood of the Lamb; which makes them to sing that melodious song, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain*. And as it is purchased, so it is promised in Christ before the world began, 2 Tim. i. 9. and Tit. i. 2. The earthly Canaan was a promised land; they had it by promise made to Abraham first, and in him to them; so is heaven promised to Christ, and in him to all the spiritual Israel.

4. It is an *eternal* inheritance, 1 Pet. i. 4. *An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away*. The earthly Canaan was but temporary, subject to be laid desolate for the sins of the inhabitants thereof; and accordingly it was laid waste, and remains so to this day: but the heavenly Canaan is an inheritance that is not liable to corruption nor defilement, and therefore fades not away. It cannot, like the former, be infested with enemies or ill neighbours, nor with any plague or malady. *The inhabitants of the land shall not say, I am sick*. It is a place of perfect health, without any sickness; and a happy immortality, without any death, or fear



fear of death : a blest eternity ; for when thousands, thousands, thousands of years are gone, their happiness is but beginning. Earthly kingdoms fade, and this world's monarch die ; but in that everlasting kingdom, *death is swallowed up in victory*. If it were to have an end after millions of years, it were enough to make them live in perplexity and trouble ; but it is eternal and everlasting. — There is a short description, from the word, of that heavenly Canaan.

III. The *third* thing is to shew what *nations* of enemies and oppositions are in the way to this heavenly Zion. See how many and mighty nations stood in the way of Israel's possessing the earthly Canaan, ver. 1. of this chapter where our text lies, *Seven nations greater and mightier than they* ; and after they came to that land of promise, some of these nations were suffered to dwell among them, particularly the Jebusites, that were like prickles in their eyes, and thorns in their sides. And in process of time, God stirred up other nations against them, for just and holy causes ; as the Philistines, the Moabites, the Ammonites, that coasted near their dwelling ; besides the Assyrians and Babylonians from remoter countries, that led them captive. And besides outward enemies and foreign invasions, they were not a little vexed and disquieted with civil and intestine dissensions : there was Saul's house against David's, and David's against Saul's ; Israel against Judah, and Judah against Israel ; Manasses against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasses ; nations thus both without and within, and enemies on every side.

Now, in like manner, there are great and mighty nations that oppose the true Israel of God, in their way to the heavenly Canaan above, and that hinder their peaceable possession of any part of heaven that through grace they possess on earth. In allusion, therefore, to the seven nations here, that God cast out before Israel of old, I shall shew seven of these nations of spiritual enemies and oppositions that are in the way to the heavenly Canaan, and that disturb the true Israel of God in any begun possession that they may have here through grace — I only premise, that as, in an outward sense, all nations of the earth proceed from one root and original, namely, the first man Adam ; so in a spiritual sense, most part of all the nations that oppose our happiness do spring from one root, and the grand root is original sin and natural corruption : here is the great commander, that leads forth multitudes of nations of actual oppositions against God, and the Israel of God that are bound for the heavenly Canaan. A body of sin and death is the fertile womb that brings forth swarms in one day ; yea, there, as it were, whole nations are born at once. But more particularly, there

there are these seven nations that oppose and vex the Israel of God in their way to Canaan :

1. A nation of *vain thoughts*. We are by nature *vain in our imaginations*, Rom. i. 21. and these vain thoughts lodge within the walls of Jerusalem, Jer. iv. 14: *O Jerusalem, wash heart from wickedness; how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* These nations lodge within, and take bed and board of you, and eat up the sap of your souls; therefore, when David says, Psalm cxix. 113. *I hate vain thoughts*, he expresses them with a word that signifies the *sprig and branch* that grows in a tree, which draws the sap out of it, and makes it fruitless. Do you not find a nation of this sort swarming about your hearts every day, and every hour of the day? yea, I am mistaken if these Philistines have not been upon you, and if these nations have not been besetting you, and besieging your souls in time of hearing, praying, communicating at this occasion; and I trow, they that are exercised and bound for heaven, will find a need of Almighty power to put out this nation before them, though there were no more; and indeed these vain thoughts are like the flying posts to the rest of the nations that may be named. But then,

2. There is a nation of *wordly cares*, which Christ compares to briars and thorns, that choke the seed of the word, Mark iv. 19. and Luke viii. 14. This nation goes under the name of *Frugality*; but if you look narrowly to its armour, you will find the motto thereof to be *careful about many things, but neglecting the one thing necessary*; and yet this is such a powerful nation that many people are subdued by it, so as they can do nothing but *mind earthly things*; and so miss heaven, and come short of salvation; yea, such is the power of this nation, even over the Israel of God, that he is obliged, in a manner, to smite them, and force the world out of their heart with a rod of correction, Isa. lvii. 17. *For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him*: yea, the rod of God will not do it, till the grace of God efficaciously be exerted; *I hid me, and was wroth; and yet he went on forwardly in the way of his heart*: but sovereign powerful grace steps in; *I have seen his ways, and will heal him*.

3. There is a nation of *doubts and fears*, and *sinful discouragements*, and *unbelieving objections*, Psal. xlii. 6, 7. The soul is overfet and overwhelmed oft-times with them. They may well be compared unto a nation; they are so many, that no sooner does a minister begin to answer objections, but the unbelieving heart will raise a thousand more; and so mighty, that there is no subduing of them, till Christ himself rebuke

rebuke them, as he did the raging waves of the sea, with a word of power, and so create a calm in the soul. This is a nation that rages, like the heathen spoken of, Psalm ii. and many *vain things against the Lord, and his anointed*; but the Lord stills the rage with the rod of *his strength* that he *sends out of Zion*, when he *makes a people willing in the day of his power*. He answers the doubts and objections of unbelief, and stills the fears and discouragements of his people, either by a word of power let in to the heart, such as that, *Fear not, it is I; be not afraid: O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?* or by a breathing of his Spirit, accompanying a word that is spoken to the ear.

4. There is a nation of *ungodly men* from without, that also vex and oppose the Israel of God in their way to the heavenly Canaan, Psalm xliii. 1. *Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation*: this is a nation that many times suppress and bear down the work of God in the soul.—The company and influence of the ungodly, that mock at religion, and laugh at sacred things, is a great let and impediment to the salvation of a soul. And as it was with Israel of old, so it is with the church in all ages; she is never without enemies that annoy her: There are four sorts of ungodly men that the church of God generally complain of; the tyrant and atheist, the heretick and the hypocrite; some of these would subvert, and others pervert her. The tyrant by heart-hatred, and open persecution; the atheist by profanity of life; the heretick by corruptness of doctrine; and hypocrite by pretences of holiness. These nations of ungodly men do oppose the Israel of God, partly by force, and partly by fraud; and indeed the secret enemies are usually the most dangerous of the twain; they that use fraud, are more dangerous than these that use force; for these, being seen and known, are more easily avoided; but the other not so easily shunned, because not suspected.

5. There is a nation of *mighty kings, and powerful giants*, as the sons of Anak are called, Num. xiii. 33. How many great kings did the Lord give into the hand of Israel? such as Og king of Bashan, Sihon king of the Amorites, Psal. cxxxvi. 18, 19, 20. Psal. cxxxv. 10, 11. But there are greater kings and potentates than these, that stand in the way of the possession of the heavenly Canaan. There are more especially four kings, mighty kings, to be subdued; for,

(1.) As *sin* is a mighty king, that reigns in us and over us naturally; therefore says the Apostle, Rom. vi. 12. *Let not sin reign in your mortal body; so,*

(2.) *Satan*



(2.) *Satan* is a mighty king in his own territories; therefore called the *prince of the world*, the *prince of the power of the air*, that rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, Eph. ii. 2.

(3.) *Self* is a mighty king; it competes with King Jesus, and keeps his throne, so long as the loftiness of man is not brought down, and the haughtiness of man made low, Isa. ii. 11. that the Lord alone may be exalted in the heart: and, even after Christ is exalted to the throne of the heart, self is still fighting and working for the throne. It is a king that all the world adore.

(4.) *Death* is a mighty king, therefore called the *king of terrors*, Job xviii. 14. He is a king that is the terror of kings, as well as inferior subjects. This is called the last enemy of God's Israel; *The last enemy to be destroyed is death*: and happy they that get the sting of death removed, which is sin. See 1 Cor. xv. 54, 55, 56, 57. *Death shall be swallowed up in victory*. Christ is the victorious conqueror of this and all other enemies; however, these are mighty kings in the way, and some of them have mighty giants in their armies, particularly these three, king sin, Satan, and self, have powerful armies to fight their hellish battles. And there are,

5. A nation of *deceitful lusts* in the heart; so called, Eph. iv. 22. These are like so many deputies and officers, captains and lieutenants, fighting under the banner of king sin, king self, and king Satan, against King Jesus, the God of glory.—O what swarms of lusts make up this army of hell! If you will travel through the camp of your heart, you will see an armed regiment of gigantic lusts: there you may see grim-faced ignorance, armed with the devil's black livery; there you may see cursed atheism and unbelief, armed with lies and blasphemies, and bitter invectives against heaven: there you will see cruel enmity, armed with a bloody sword of forcible opposition unto God and Christ: there you will see subtle hypocrisy, armed with fraud and flattery: there you will see brazen faced hardness of heart, armed with a brow of brass: there you may see dultish security, armed with a fearless spirit, and a stupid conscience; bold presumption, armed with a daring countenance; towering pride, armed with a robe of gaudy attire, and an eye of scorn, contempt and disdain; as also self-righteous confidence, armed with gross ignorance, both of the spirituality of the law, and mystery of the gospel.—There is a powerful nation of heart plagues, and deceitful lusts, that reign over the ungodly world, and many times rage in the hearts of believers, to the leading of them captive.

6. There is a nation of *actual out-breakings* in the life, and *sins* in the conversation: these are like the common soldiers of the army of hell, making daily excursions into the camp of Israel; yea, every hour of the day they are breaking out on this hand, and on that hand, and round about us on all hands, in innumerable omissions and commissions. Here breaks out intemperance and inebriety, in eating, drinking, and using of the comforts of life; there breaks out idle words, vain talking, unprofitable conversation: here appears negligence in duty, or carelessness and indifferency in hearing, reading, praying, communicating: and there appears mis-spending of time, Sabbath and week-days both, wasting our precious opportunities, and mis-improving our talents, without endeavouring to do good or get good, to glorify God, or edify those that are conversant with us. The former nation I mentioned was the lusts of the flesh, and this nation is the works of the flesh: the lusts of the flesh are deceitfully hidden within the walls; the works of the flesh are open and manifest, making continual outward excursions. You have a list of them, Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. Another list of the names of the soldiers of this army you may read, 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *So. Men shall be lovers of themselves*: there goes the king and commander in chief, self-love; and then follows a list of the common soldiers, *covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.*

Now, these are seven nations continually in arms, and at work for hell, and against heaven; the nation of vain thoughts continually flying post through the rest of the nations for intelligence; the nation of worldly cares continually making provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof; the nation of doubts, and unbelieving fears and jealousies, is still keeping watch, and standing centry at the door of the heart, to keep out all heavenly messages, and exclude all proposals of peace with heaven; the nation of ungodly men continually guarding the out works of hell, and playing their battering rams, to beat down what God, and Christ and the gospel, would build up. The nation of mighty kings, that I mentioned, are still issuing forth new commands and orders for war against heaven; the nation of deceitful lusts, like officers of the army, are still mustering the host, leading them forth to the field of battle, and setting them in battle array; and the nation of actual  
sins

sins and out-breakings are still brandishing their swords and spears, making daily and hourly excursions out of the camp of hell, and incursions upon their opposites and antagonists, running upon the camp of Israel to destroy them, and hinder their march to the heavenly Canaan. Now, to these seven nations all the world of mankind are by nature kept in subjection; and, which is worse, they are willing slaves and captives to them: and even the Israel of God, that have left their camp, and fled under the colours and standard of the Lord Jesus Christ, the captain of salvation, are many times led captive by them; they are still giving battle to Israel.

Now, O thou that art bound for the celestial Canaan, what thinkest thou of these nations? are they not *seven nations, greater and mightier than thou*? Surely if thou hast found, to thy sad experience, the power, and policy, and pernicious influence of these mighty nations upon thee, it will be welcome news to hear that "The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little."

IV. The *fourth* thing that I proposed, was to speak a little of the *conqueror* of these nations; that is, the King of Glory; the Lord strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle. Indeed, they that have such mighty nations to fight and debate with, have need of a mighty conqueror to subdue them: and he is here said to be the *Lord thy God*; where he is described, 1. By his name, *Jehovah*. 2. By his relation to them in Christ, *Thy God*.

1<sup>st</sup>, Israel's captain, that fights their battles, is described by his great name *Jehovah*; THE LORD, in capital letters; which is ordinarily used in all our English translations, to intimate, that in the original it is JEHOVAH; and it is a name that points out the perfection of his nature: it is remarked, that all along the first chapter of Genesis, while God was yet upon his creating work, he is called *Elochim*, a *God of power*; but in the second chapter of Genesis, verse 4. God having compleated his work, he is then called *Jehovah-Elochim*, a *God of power and perfection*. And as here he takes that name when he perfects what he had begun, so we find him making himself known by this name, when he appears to perform what he had promised to Israel, *Exod vi. 3. I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by the name of GOD ALMIGHTY; but by my name JEHOVAH was I not made known to them.* God would now be known by his name *Jehovah*, as being, 1. A God performing what he had promised, and to giving a being to his promises. 2. A God perfecting what he had begun, and finishing his own work. And now, the subduing of the Canaanites before Israel was a work



that God had promised, and a work that now he had begun. Therefore, he makes himself known in this work by his name *Jehovah*, a performing and perfecting God. This is the powerful and perfecting conqueror, that all the true Israel of God have to look to, and depend upon, for destroying the nations of spiritual enemies for them. This name belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, equally with the Father and the eternal Spirit. It is he that led Israel out of Egypt by the hand of Moses, wrought wonders for them, and brought them to Canaan and delivered their enemies into their hand; by all which was typified the greater salvation and deliverance that he was to work, in accomplishing the business of our redemption in our nature. And by taking to himself the name *JESUS*, he hath not lost the name *JEHOVAH*; nay, he could not be a *Jesus* if he were not a *Jehovah*; he could not destroy these nations I have named, the sum of which is sin; for to destroy sin, is more than to make a world. Sin cannot be destroyed without satisfying that infinite justice that sin offended, and glorifying that infinite holiness that sin affronted, and fulfilling that law that sin had violated, and appeasing that wrath and vengeance that sin had kindled. Further, sin could not be destroyed, without destroying the devil that begat it, and the wicked heart that brought it forth; all which requires a new creation, more great and glorious than the first, and belongs to none but *Jehovah*. This name points out the divine glory of our Redeemer and conqueror, which I offer in these two further remarks upon it.

1. This great name *Jehovah* (as these that investigate the Hebrew root observe) signifies being, essence, simple existence, or self-subsistence; and imports his most simple, absolute, eternal, and independent being and existence; having his being in, of, and from himself, and from whose infinite being, all creatures have their infinite being.

2. This great name *Jehovah* comprehends in itself the three Hebrew tenses; the preterite, signifying the time past; the present, signifying what is now; and the future, signifying what is to come; and imports that designation given to Christ, Rev. i. 4, 8. *Which is, and which was, and which is to come.*—Thus he is the *I AM THAT I AM*, as he is called, Exod. iii. 14. The Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; the first without beginning, and the last without end. O! but they that have such a glorious general to follow, need not fear to take the field against the nations! he is *JEHOVAH*.

3dly, Israel's Captain general is here described by his relation to them; *thy God, the Lord thy God*. This relation is stated upon the ground of a new covenant dispensation, even a covenant

covenant of promise in Christ Jesus. Of this covenant there was an old testament dispensation, under which this people of Israel were; and a new testament dispensation, under which we are. The former was a darker, and this is a clearer and brighter dispensation of the same new covenant. The old covenant of works being broken and violated by the sin of man, God could not in honour come under this relation again to sinners, but upon the ground of a new covenant established in Christ. This covenant of promise was first discovered to Adam in paradise, afterwards to Abraham and others. The promise of that new covenant was sealed by the blood of Christ typically, under the Old Testament, by the sacrifices then offered, and actually at Jerusalem, when he gave his life a ransom for many. Upon the footing of this covenant, I say it is, that he asserts this relation, *the Lord thy God*. But more particularly, for explaining this relative designation, *thy God*; we may take a fourfold view thereof.

1. It is expressive of the ancient *federal relation* betwixt God and Israel of old, the church of the Jews under that dispensation. He became their God, and they were chosen of him to be his peculiar people, beyond all other people in the world, as you see, Deut. vii. 6. "For thou art a holy people" "to the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee" "to be a special people to himself, above all people upon the" "face of the earth." He made known his mind, with respect to the way of salvation, to them, and they to others, Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20. "He shewed his word unto Jacob, and his" "statutes and his judgments to Israel; he hath not dealt so with" "any nation." And having taken them visibly into a covenant relation, he establishes his covenant with them and their seed, Deut. x. 15. "The Lord had delight in thy fathers to" "love them; and he chose their seed after them." And thus he said to Abraham, Gen. xvii. 7. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, to be a" "God to thee and to thy seed." Hence says God to them, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—All this is said of them, even with respect to their church state, abstract from the singular saving privileges of true believers among them, who through grace were enabled to improve these great advantages they enjoyed above other people. By virtue of this relation that he stood in to them, he engaged, as the *Lord their God* to put out the nations of the Canaanites before them by little and little.

2. You may view it as expressive of the *present federal relation* that God stands in to the visible church under the New Testament, even to us Gentiles, as succeeding to the Jews in

their church privileges, together with superadded advantages, in so far as the New Testament dispensation does excel that of the Old, as it was said to the Jewish church, *The promise is to you and to your children*, Acts ii. 39, and that *to them belongs the adoption and the glory, the covenant and the promise*, Rom. ix. 4. So in like manner do they belong to the Christian church, we being grafted among them, to partake of the *root and fatness of their olive tree*, Rom. xi. 17. Hence flows a common interest that all the members of the visible church have in God as their God, and Christ as their head; not only as an head of eminency, but as an head of influence and government. All the common influences shed among the members of the visible church come from his source, and from thence result many excellent privileges, all which are sealed in baptism, which succeeds to the seal of circumcision among the Jews. Baptism seals to us, and to all the visible church, a common general right to God's covenant, so as we may warrantably plead the promises, and the promise in particular, *I will be your God; and you shall be my people*; which is the fundamental promise. Great are the privileges that belong to the visible church, that do not belong to these that are without; God commits to them his ministry, his oracles and ordinances, by the means of which he brings forth children, and gathers his elect, so as "out of the church visible there is" no ordinary possibility of salvation," Acts ii. last. As all the baptized members of the visible church have a sealed interest in the covenant of promise, such as lays them under a special obligation to believe in Christ, so they have a claim, beyond the rest of the world, to God as their God in Christ, and as their Saviour: yea, all the church visible are said to be in Christ, John xv. 2. even these branches that bear not fruit, and that shall be taken away, and cast into the fire. Baptism seals our ingraftment into Christ; that is an ingraftment common to all that are members of the visible church, besides the saving spiritual ingraftment of true believers. Now, that common relation that you all have to God, as church-members, though it be common to believers and unbelievers, yet it is in itself a special privilege, whereby you are exalted above the rest of the world that are without the church, and gives every one of you a right to plead this promise to be accomplished to you in a spiritual sense: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before you by little and little*; even such nations of spiritual enemies as were typified the Canaanites.

3. You may view this relative designation, *Thy God*, as expressive of the *special* relation he stands in to the church invisible militant here upon earth; I mean, to true believers, the living



living members of Christ, and true Israel of God, whom he makes so, by becoming their God, in a way of sovereign free grace, in and through Jesus Christ, in whom they have a peculiar interest in God as their God, and a special title to all the promises of the new covenant as their charter; all the promises thereof being *yea* and *amen* in Christ Jesus. Now, it is in this sense especially that I consider this designation, *The Lord thy God*; because it is the spiritual intent of the text that I treat, namely, as it does typify and represent the spiritual deliverance of the true Israel of God from their spiritual enemies, in order to their possession of the heavenly Canaan; yet not excluding the great appearances the Lord makes of his church visible on earth, collectively considered. And here it is proper you observe, that though this title, *The Lord thy God*, be oftentimes in scripture spoken of with respect to a visible church, a mixt people of good and bad; as when he says to Israel, "I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and house of bondage;" and whereas, in many instances, it is spoken collectively of the whole body of the church, yet this rule is to be noticed, that, where the Lord is mentioned in relation thus to a mixt people, all the privileges that flow from such a relation of God to that people, are but common privileges, I mean common to all that visible church. Thus the privilege of bringing out of the land of Egypt, was a common privilege, common to all that people, good and bad among them; and so was this privilege of cutting off the nations of the Canaanites before them in a literal sense, and possessing them of the earthly Canaan: and, therefore, though God be called the God of a church or people collectively, which infers many excellent privileges, though common to them all, as was shewed above, yet he is not their God in the same respect as he is the God of the believer, or of the true Israel. As they are *not all Israel that are of Israel* (for the whole visible church, God's professing people, are of Israel; but only true believers are Israelites indeed; and Jews inwardly, the true spiritual circumcision) for these true Israelites have a course by common, having a special and peculiar propriety in God as their God, which infers special and peculiar privileges. And hence,

4. You may view this designation, *Thy God*, as expressive of all the  *blessings*  that are imported in this special relation that he stands in to his true Israel. And, indeed, the privileges imported thus in the word, *thy God*, are innumerable and unspeakable. His being their God, imports that they have an interest in all that he is, and all that he hath, and all that he can do, and is wont to do for these whose God he is. Here

is a field that would take a long eternity to travel through.—*Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.* All happiness in time, and for ever, is imported in it. His being their God, imports all the relations that he can be in to them, for making them holy and happy for ever in himself; that he is and will be their *sun* to enlighten them, their *portion* to enrich them, their *father* to pity them, their *husband* to cherish them, their *righteousness* to clothe them, their *guide* to conduct them, their *glory* to crown them, and their ALL in all. But the text confines me to these relations imported in this title, *Thy God*, which have a respect to his destroying their enemies before them by little and little. I only mention two of these; 1. His being their *God*, imports that he is their *friend*, though their enemies be many. 2. His being their *God*, imports that he is their *shield*, though their enemies be mighty.

(1.) Amidst the multitude of enemies, their *God* is their *friend*. And, indeed, no matter who be our enemies, if God be our friend. *If God be for us, says the apostle, who can be against us?* Rom. viii. 31. And he is a friend to all these to whom he is God in a peculiar manner. And his being their friend, imports the removal of feud and enmity, his anger being turned away, and reconciliation made up through Christ, whatever was the former difference. It imports the acceptance of their persons into favour, and the obligation he lies under as a friend, by virtue of the new covenant of grace and promise, to help them in every time of need, and to do all their works in them and for them, and to fight all their battles. Therefore,

(2.) Though their enemies be mighty, his being their God, imports that he is their *shield*. *The Lord God is a sun and shield* to them, Psalm lxxxiv. 12. The shields of the earth are his; and his being their shield, is to be understood both in a *defensive* and *offensive* way. 1. He is the Lord their God and shield to defend them, Psalm vii. 10. *My defence is of God, which saves the upright in heart.* Hence called a *strong tower* and *rock of defence*, a *hiding place*, a *covert*, a *shadow*, to shelter them from the assaults and attacks of the nations of enemies that are within them, and round about them, Isa. xxxii. 2. “A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” 2. He is the Lord their God and shield, for *offending* all their enemies. Hence he is said to have a sword of power girded on his thigh, for executing judgment on their enemies, Deut. xxxii. 31. “If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and a reward to them that hate me; I will make mine  
arrows

"arrows drunk with blood;" &c. read also verse 43, and compare it with Isa. lxiii. 1, 2, 3, 4. "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, for the year of my redemption is come." O! it is a day of happy vengeance to the Israel of God, when he, as their mighty conqueror, subdues the nations under them, and takes vengeance on all their powerful lusts and spiritual enemies. A day of vengeance to the enemy, is a day of redemption to his friends. But this leads me to the,

V. The *fifth* thing proposed, namely, to speak of the *manner* of the conquest. We have heard of the conqueror, here designed, *The Lord thy God*; and now the manner of the conquest is, "He will put out these nations before thee by little and little." And here three things may be noticed with reference to the manner of the conquest; 1. It is obtained powerfully and effectually; *He will put out these nations*. 2. Visibly and remarkably; he will put them out *before thee*. 3. Gradually and piece mail; *by little and little*. To each of these I would speak a word.

*First*, The *manner* of the conquest is, that it is obtained powerfully and effectually: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations*; or, as it is rendered in the margin, he will *pluck off* these nations. And so it is further explained, verse 23. of this chapter, he will *deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction till they be destroyed utterly. And he will deliver their kings into thine hand*, verse 24. and Exod. 23. 30. *By little and little will I drive them out*. Now thus, in the spiritual conquest, the nations must be put out; and the Lord's putting them out does import,

1. That these nations of lusts and spiritual enemies have *strength* and *power* upon their side; so that it is no easy work to get them driven out, yea utterly impossible, unless the Lord our God undertake it. If you ask, where the *strength* of these nations lies, and particularly the strength of sin? I answer in these four things:

(1.) The strength of the nation of sin and lusts lies in their *root*, the body of sin and death: as the strength of a tree lies in the root, so that the ax\* must be laid to the root, if you would destroy it; and as the strength of the water is in the fountain, so that, if you would destroy it, the fountain must be stopp'd up; so the strength of sin is in the root and fountain of sin that is within. And hence,

(2.) The strength of these nations of lusts lies in the *relation* they have to ourselves: and hence for a man to destroy his lusts, is to deny himself. These nations of lusts and sins are such a part of himself, that they seem to be the best part, and  
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the most useful part of himself; his right hand, his right eye, his members, Col. iii. 5. "Mortify therefore your members that are upon the earth."

(3.) The strength of these nations lies in the *commander* and captain-general that leads them forth, that is, the devil; the great quarter-master that fills the heart, as it is said of Ananias, Acts v. 3. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart, to lie to the Holy Ghost, and keep back part of the price?"—It is the devil that fills the heart of people to lie, and fills their heart to swear, and fills their heart to drink and debauch, and fills their heart to keep back what service is due to God. This commander is a strong man, and cannot be conquered but by a stronger. Yea,

(4.) The strength of these nations of sin lies in the *law of works*, Cor. xv. 59. "The strength of sin is the law." Sin hath dominion over all that are *under the law*, and not *under grace*, Rom. vi. 14. and that on many accounts, that I cannot now insist upon; but particularly among the rest, because by reason of the original breach thereof, they are under the curse of it, of which curse the strength of sin is a great part; so that no less power than that which can pull up the root, a body of sin and death, and pull down self, and all the members of it, and that can destroy the devil the captain of hell, and at the same time give full satisfaction to the law of the God of heaven; no less power can destroy these nations, for here their strength lies. The Lord's putting them out, supposes and imports this strength and power that they have upon their side.

2. It imports that these nations of lusts and spiritual enemies have the *possession*, which indeed is also a great part of their strength. There would be no need of driving them out, if they were not in: nay, they are in possession, they are in actual possession of the understanding of all men by nature, who are therefore alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them. They have actual possession of the will; hence men are not only unwilling to let these nations go out, and as unwilling as Pharaoh was to let Israel go, though plagued from heaven for his wilfulness; but also the will is filled with enmity against God, and rises up in arms and opposition against him, and in favours of these lusts. Yea, they have possession of all the powers and faculties of the soul: they are deeply rooted in the heart and nature, as the Jebusites were in the land of Canaan; and there they fortify and intrench themselves, so that it is no easy work to drive them out; yea, as they have no will to go out, so out they will never go, till they be driven out by a superior power, as Christ drove the buyers.

buyers and sellers out of the temple, who turned the temple of God to a den of thieves. Therefore,

3. It imports an exerting of the *divine power* in opposition to these nations, in order to their being put out and destroyed: and that is even the almighty power of God in Christ, by the Holy Ghost, Rom. viii. 13. "If you through the spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live." It is not by the power of nature, or free will; "not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts," Zech. iv. 9. When the conquest is actually commenced in a soul, the spirit of God comes and gives battle to the nations of the Canaanites, the lusts and old inhabitants of the heart, and takes possession. How he does so, may afterwards more appear: only, I say here, the Lord's putting out the nations imports, that his almighty power is actually put forth for this end.

4. It imports, that this power is and shall be *effectual*; for it is said, *He will put them out*; he will drive them out of their old quarters, and destroy them; he will drive them out of the heart, out of the house, out of the will, out of the affections, out of all sorts where they strengthened themselves, and at last out of the world, when he completes his work of sanctification; for, *He that hath begun the good work will perfect it*, Phil. i. 6. And sure there is no true-hearted Israelite here but will say, Amen, Lord hasten the time when these nations of lusts shall be driven out of my heart, and driven out of the world: Lord, let them be driven to hell with the devil their captain, and let me be quit of them for ever. Well, the day of their complete extirpation is a coming; *The Lord thy God will drive out these nations*. But then,

*Secondly*, The manner of the conquest here expressed, is *visible and remarkable*; he will drive them out *before thee*. I think this word may import the visible and remarkable manner of the conquest; and more particularly,

1. That the Israel of God get a *sight* of their enemies.—These nations are in their view, while the Lord their God is driving them out, and while they through grace, are led to the field of battle against them: he will drive them out *before thee*. They that never got a view of their sins and lusts, nor of the strength of their arms; that never saw their own corrupt nature, nor experienced the power of corruption in their hearts: they are yet living at their carnal ease, in the midst of these nations, and under the power thereof: they are *alive without the law*, Rom. vii. 6. The commandment hath not come, nor sin revived, to discover its strength to them; they are yet soldiers under the devil's banner: they have not taken

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on with Christ: the battle with the nations is not yet begun, for they never yet saw them, nor viewed their strength.

2. His driving out the nations before them imports, that, through grace, the Israel of God are made *active* herein. It is *before thee* they shall be driven out. Being acted by his grace, they act; being armed by his spirit, they fight; and through the spirit mortify the deeds of the body. It is true, sometimes the Israel of God have nothing ado at all, but just to stand still, as it were, and see the salvation of God; to stand still, and see how the waters will divide to let them through, and how they will return to drown and overwhelm their enemies. But, for ordinary, their work is to go forward, in the name and strength of the Lord their God, and give battle to their enemies, that they may be destroyed before them, and under the banner of Christ Jesus, the glorious Captain of salvation, to fight the good fight of faith. Yea,

3. His driving out the nations before them imports, that, even when they are called to act and fight, they shall have no *ground of boasting*, but rather of *blushing*, when they consider what part it is that they act in this matter, for the Lord himself must be the agent; *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee*. Israel's captain goes before them, and leads the van; the lion of the tribe of Judah must go before them, and tear their enemies to pieces: It is he that subdues the nations under them. He hath gone before them already, and had a bloody battle with all the nations of hell upon mount Calvary; there he fought, and overcame principalities and powers; there he condemned sin in the flesh, and destroyed the strength of it by nailing the law to the cross, Col. ii. 14. And however the nations may rally their forces again, and seem formidable and dreadful, yet their strength being broken at this bloody engagement, the believer hath no more ado, in effect, but to hold up the red flag of the blood of Christ by faith, and then he overcomes by the *blood of the Lamb*, Rev. xii. 11. The great battle is already fought, and the great art of the believer, in all the lesser battles, lies in setting his captain before him, saying, *I'll go in the strength of the Lord; for in the Lord only have I righteousness and strength*; viewing him as before them in the field, according to his promise, *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee*.

4. It may import, that as the Lord their God will make their enemies to flee before their face, so they shall be *witnesses* to the wonders of his power in overthrowing the nations in their way. The true Israel of God dare hardly call themselves warriors against their enemies, but rather witnesses to the battle of the Lord, when he fights for them, and makes them



them overcome, and then gives them the name of conquerors; yea, more than conquerors through him that loveth them. He overcomes for them, and then crowns them as the overcomers, saying, *To him that overcomes, will I give to sit with me on my throne, &c.* They are witnesses to his exploits against their enemies; for his ordinary time of fighting remarkably for them, is when their strength is gone, and when he sees their power is gone, and none shut up or left, by reason of the power for their enemies, Deut. xxxii. 36. then he steps in, and takes vengeance on their enemies. And indeed the day of power is a day remarkable for victories over sin, satan, the world, and the lusts thereof. Do you mind the day, believer, when you thought there was a legion of devils, a nation of lusts, an army of corruptions, a regiment of hell within you? but behold you got a view of the Captain of salvation, ready to put out these nations before you, and you got grace to take hold of him, to believe in him, and so to turn to fight the armies of the aliens: are there not some remarkable times when you got your feet set upon the neck of your lusts? *By thee I have run through a troop,* says David, Psalm xviii. 29. *and by my God I overleap a wall.* It is true, the conquest is not aye remarkable; for sometimes the nations encompass them about like bees, and sting them, and torment them, and prevail against them: *iniquities prevail against me,* says David: yet they never prevail so far, but that grace still renews the fight, and at last obtains the victory, though yet through many ups and downs, and fallings and risings, to's and fro's, and changes. Therefore,

*Thirdly,* The manner of the conquest here expressed is *gradual, by little and little.* This is the main point here intended, with reference to the manner of the Lord's destroying the nations: Therefore, I would here, 1. Shew what may be imported in this his putting out the nations by little and little. 2. By what several steps, strokes, or degrees, he puts out the nations in a spiritual sense.

1<sup>st</sup>, As to the *import* of this phrase, *by little and little.*

1. It says, that the Israel of God are not to expect that their spiritual enemies will be all *vanquished* at the first onset.— Though the victory be begun whenever the soul gets in to Christ, and under his colours, who is the captain of salvation, yet the commencement of the spiritual war is not the completion thereof; nay, there may be many a battle before the war be at a close, and the victory complete; for though the enemy hath got a dead stroke, and though the nation of lusts, like the beast mentioned, Dan vii. 12. *have their do-*

*minion taken away, yet their lives are prolonged for a season*, which occasions the war to be prolonged.

2. By little and little, it imports, that the visible advantages over the nations of spiritual enemies may be *very small*; Israel may be at a time but holpen with *little help*, Dan. xi. 34. and get a *little reviving in their bondage*, Ezra ix. 8. a little victory at a time, a small advantage against the enemy; but though it be small, yet *the day of small things is not to be despised*, Zech. iv. 10. for, as we say, many smalls make a great!—Therefore,

3. The Lord's putting them out by little and little imports, that though the several foils be small, yet they are *successful*; for by little and little the nations are thus put out and discomfited; every new battle tends to the ruining of the enemy more and more. Let not the believer say that nothing is done, because so little is done, and the enemy is yet alive. O be thankful, if by little and little the Lord be putting them out, and gradually diminishing their forces.

4. By little and little, it imports the *continuation* and *progress* of the war, until there be a total extirpation of the nations. There may be an intermission of strokes, now a stroke and then a stroke given to the enemy; but no intermission of the war during the militant state, no proclamation of peace with the enemy, no league with any lust among the true Israel of God. Lusts may indeed rise and rage, and rally their forces again, even after they are rooted, and a multitude of these nations may gather together; and the believer may be in great fears of the issue, lest he be swallowed up and destroyed before them, till by faith he get a new recruit of auxiliaries and strength from heaven, and then he will say, with the Psalmist, Psalm cxviii. 10, 11. *The nations compassed me about, but in the name of the Lord will I destroy them; for then the right hand of the Lord does valiantly*. Yet still it is by little and little; here a little and there a little; here a little stroke given to satan's kingdom, and there a little stroke; here a little dash given to the old man and his lusts, and there a little dash; a little at this duty, and a little at another; a little at this sermon, and a little at another sermon; at this sacrament, and the other sacrament, till the finishing stroke be given. But this leads to the other question here:

*2dly*. By what *steps* and degrees is the conquest over the nations advanced to a total extirpation of them? Here I might enquire, 1. By what degrees the conquest is advanced by Israel's captain in his own person? 2. By what degrees it is advanced by him in their persons?

(1.) By

(1.) By what degrees the conquest is advanced and completed by the captain of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ, in *his own person*? I will tell you four remarkable periods of his conquest, wherein you may see four remarkable degrees thereof.

1<sup>st</sup> Period was the commencement of the war in paradise, immediately after the fall of Adam; there he proclaimed war between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; and after the proclamation, during that Old Testament period, he kept all his soldiers in expectation of appearing, according to that promise and proclamation, as their head and general; so that, in the faith of this coming Messiah, they overcome.

2<sup>d</sup> Period was in the remarkable combat that was betwixt the two heads of the two contending parties on mount Calvary, Christ on the one hand, and the serpent on the other; when, though the serpent bruised his heel unto blood, yet he broke the serpent's head with his bloody heel, while *by death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil*, and vanquished the nations of hell, by destroying their commander's power.

3<sup>d</sup> Period was in the after-game that followed upon this memorable combat; when in his resurrection and ascension unto heaven, he dismantled all the garrisons of Satan, *divided the spoil with the strong, led captivity captive*: which laid the foundation for a successful war to all his Israel, carried on between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels; where the dragon, having got a deadly stroke, cannot prevail, Rev. xii. 7, 8. though he continue thus to rally his forces against heaven, and all that bend heavenward to the end of the world. And then comes the 4<sup>th</sup> period, in that consummate stroke which the captain of salvation will give to the devil and his armies, at the great day, when he will come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; then death, and he that had the power of it, shall be utterly destroyed; for, *the last enemy to be destroyed is death*, 1 Cor. xv. 56. from the first to the last enemy, not one shall be left nor spared from destruction: then sin and death, that was brought in by sin, shall be under an eternal banishment, never more to appear among the Israel of God. Thus you see by what steps and degrees the conquest is effectuated by the Lord Jesus in his own person.

(2.) By what degrees, say you, is it actually obtained by him in *his members and soldiers*, when he drives out the nations before them? Why, 1. By little and little, he brings them to the field of battle against the nations, in a day of power, when the spiritual war is begun. 2. By little and little, he carries on the conquest, till the day of death, when the warfare is concluded.



1<sup>st</sup>. I say, by little and little he brings them forth to the *field* against the nations of lusts that stand in their way to the heavenly Canaan, and that in a day of power, in a day of conversion, when the spiritual war is commenced in the man's person.

*Quest.* How does the Lord their God bring them forth against the enemy?

I do not limit the Lord to this or that way; He is sovereign: but I speak of the ordinary steps and degrees, by which he brings any poor sinner that was under the power of sin and Satan, mixed with, and under the power of the nations of hell; by which, I say, he brings them to the field. There are several fields that the captain of salvation leads them through, before they be on the field of battle, where the nations are put out before them.

1. He leads them to the field of *consideration*, and makes them there bethink themselves what a sad state and condition they are in, while waging war against heaven, under the devil's banner. What am I doing? and where am I going? and, what will be the end of these things, and of living in the service of these nations of lusts? Many never go so far towards the heavenly Canaan, as to step in to this field of consideration. *The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not consider,* Isa. i. 3. But, ah! many never so much as turn their faces towards the field of battle against their lusts, so long as they do not enter on this field of consideration. Therefore, when the Lord begins a good work on his people, he brings them first to consider their ways; *I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet to thy testimonies.* May be he brings them to it by some rousing providence, whereby he stops their career in wickedness, and hedges up their way with thorns, as he stopt Manasses, and held him in the thorns of *Babylon*, till he began to consider and know that the Lord was God, and that he was fighting against God.

2. Another little advance, while by little and little he leads them forth to battle, is his bringing them next to the field of *concern*. This natively follows upon due consideration. The man is brought to see the hazard and danger he is compassed with, and to be afraid of the issue. Some may make a step in to the field of *consideration* a little, but they presently step back again, without going forward to the field of concern; but when the Lord hath a mind to bring one forward to the camp for war, he brings them into the field of *great concern*, where they are filled with a greater concern about salvation than ever they had about any thing in the world, saying, with the

the jailor, *O what shall I do to be saved?* and with Peter's hearers, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* is there any salvation for me, that have been fighting against God all my days?

3. Another little advance is, his bringing them out of the field of *concern* to the field of *restlessness*, even to a restless endeavour to come out of Satan's camp, and out of that sad condition they see themselves into; for this concern about salvation, and fear of everlasting damnation, makes them to fall about the means of relief, and so they read, and pray, and hear, and meditate, and mourn, and weep, and reform; and you would think they were by this time beginning to fight against the nations of their lusts: but, however these means be good in themselves, and a restlessness in the use of them may be wrought under the awakening influence of the spirit of God; yet there is some other field the man must be taken through, before he can be capable to lift arms against his lusts in an evangelical and acceptable manner: for, as yet, his legal heart leads him to nothing but a legal warfare, under which his spiritual lusts remain still in their strength and dominion. The man is yet *under the law*, and so *under the dominion of sin*, Rom. vi. 14. And hence, while he is yet in this field, he is ready to be filled with vain imaginations, and legal dreams, like the young man in the gospel, that it is by doing some good thing or other he is to have eternal life. In this case, he may be doing a great deal of duties, and doing what he can with the greatest natural seriousness, and yet to no purpose; because he is doing upon the principle of the old covenant of works, *do and live*. Therefore,

4. Another little advance is the Lord's bringing them from that field of *restlessness* to the field of *despair*; so as to despair of ever getting victory by their legal diligence, to despair of life by the law, and their own obedience thereto. When the soul is upon this field, it meets with the law, and sees the extent and spirituality of it, as exacting no less than perfection, internal perfection in heart and nature, external perfection in lip and life, eternal perfection in point of continuance and duration; for, *curst is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, and so all this perfection it requires upon pain of eternal death and damnation. Now, *the commandment comes*, Rom. vii. 9. and though the man was *alive without the law once*, and reckoned he was right enough, and had fair for the heavenly Canaan, as well as his neighbours, yet the commandment thus coming, *sin revives*, and he dies; his hope and expectation by the law, or by his legal endeavours, give up the ghost. Now, till he

man be brought to this field of *despair*, he is not brought half way to the field of battle against the nations of enemies in his way to Canaan; but when the Lord brings a man to this despair in himself, and to despair of relief from creatures and means, then there begins to be some *hope in Israel concerning him*. Therefore,

5. Another little advance, while the Lord is bringing the man by little and little to the gospel camp, is this: he brings them from the field of *despair* to the field of *hope*; I mean, to a far-way fight of the cape of good hope, in the hearing of the glad news of the gospel concerning the captain of salvation, in whom alone poor enslaved sinners may be made more than conquerors over sin, and Satan, and the world, over death and hell, and all spiritual enemies. The soul hears of this mighty captain, that he is able to save to the uttermost; and so conceives hope, that may be he will shew mercy, and deliver a poor captive. I speak not here of the new and lively hope, that is the fruit and effect of faith; for, on this field of hope that I speak of, the man is yet between hope and despair, as it were; this hope cannot be a helmet to him, while he yet wants the shield of faith; yet it is such a hope, wrought by the objective revelation of the gospel, as keeps him from sinking into utter discouragement, and encourages him to go forward, because he sees a door of hope open in the call of the gospel, wherein he hears Christ calling him to come to him freely, and receive his grace. O there is the door of a new covenant open, says the man within himself; I see it is open for the like of me, and I am particularly called to come in at this open door. And now, when the man is brought to this, he is truly not far from the kingdom of heaven, not far from the field of battle: he need but to be holpen with a little farther, and then his course is compleat. Therefore,

6. Another little advance is, after the soul is brought over all these fields, by the good hand of God upon him, he is brought into the field of *saving faith*, getting such a discovery of Jesus Christ, the captain of salvation, by the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, as powerfully determines him to take on with him, as a volunteer, being made willing in the day of power, and being charmed with the glory of his person, the freedom of his grace, the holiness of the standard, and ruddy ensign died with his own blood. Here the man sees him girding his sword upon his thigh, even his glory and majesty: by this sword of glorious grace, the sinner is made a willing subject, a willing soldier to follow the glorious captain, and employ him to fight all his battles, and drive out all the nations of his lusts before him. And now the man



is a believer, and is come indeed to the field of battle, being joined to the Lord Jesus Christ, and disjoined from his old general: now he is, by virtue of union to Christ, intitled to a compleat victory over all the nations of enemies in his way, and entitled to all these new recruits from heaven, that are necessary for the gradual subduing of the nations before him, till he win to the possession of the heavenly Canaan.

Thus you may see how by little and little the Lord brings them forth to the field of battle; and by what various degrees they are brought from slaves to the devil and their lusts, to be soldiers of Christ. But now, as by little and little he brings them to the field of battle against the nations in a day of power: so,

2dly, By little and little he carries on the conquest till the day of death, when the warfare is compleated. The text leads me to speak of the captain's part: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little.*

And indeed his part is the leading part in the all of this conquest, for, *without him we can do nothing*. To engage with the enemy alone, and encounter the nations in our own strength were madness; every lust will laugh at the shaking of our spear. It is Christ alone, and his spirit, that can destroy the nations before us. But now, the gradual conquest, till the day of death, by little and little, speaks out these two things:

1. That the Israel of God hath many *sad experiences* all their days, that their enemies the nations are not utterly destroyed, but are living and lively, strong and prevalent many times.
2. That they have also many *sweet experiences*, all their days, of little aid and auxiliaries from heaven, whereby the enemy is driven out and destroyed by little and little, from time to time.

1. I say, this gradual conquest taking place till death, and the warfare, speaks out many *sad experiences*, that the nations of their lusts, and corruptions, and spiritual enemies, are not utterly destroyed, and that, notwithstanding of their being got fairly under the colours of their glorious captain, yet they will find all their days that their enemies are living, lively, strong, and prevalent: for, their destruction being but by little and little, the conquest may be many times undiscernable, while yet the power of the enemy appears great and formidable, notwithstanding any little advantage gained at a time, and while they find many dreadful sallies and excursions that the enemy makes upon them. Now, may I not ask the Israel of God here, If they have not too many sad experiences of the yet remaining life and strength of the enemy? does not your sad experience

perience say, that *that there is a law in your members warring against the law of your mind, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sin that is in your members*, Rom. vii. 23. and that you *wrestle not against flesh and blood only, but against principalities and powers*? Eph. vi. 12. Does not sad experience witness how violent your corruptions are, and how impetuously they break through every hedge, notwithstanding of your being sure to be scratched with thorns; and how eagerly they follow the bait, even when the hook is most discernable?—Does not sad experience witness, that it is *within* you that ails you most, and that your greatest adversaries are men of your own house; and that, in the worst of times, there is aye more cause to complain of an evil heart than of an evil world, and that it is this carnal heart especially that clogs and hampers you in your flight, and motion towards God, and makes many times your choicest duties to be like a grievous task?—Does not sad experience witness, even since you was brought to the field of battle against your spiritual enemies, that there is more wickedness in your hearts, siding with the enemy, than you could have believed, though it had been told you? when once a day you got your feet upon the necks of your enemies, you could never have thought they would so fearfully prevail again; or if you had thought it, would it not have been a terror to you? Does not sad experience witness such a power of corruption, that no sooner did you venture to sport therewith, but it quickly hath turned to earnest, and carried all before it? so much gun-powder for the enemy do you carry about with you, that you take fire upon the smallest touch, and are ready to be blown up with the flame.—Does not sad experience witness how soon the *strongest resolution*, even under the sweetest gales, will vanish; that you are not oft in the evening what you was in the morning, nor for many hours do you keep the ground you had attained; and how quickly you destroy that which grace hath built; insomuch that if grace was not stronger to save and preserve, than you are to mar and destroy, you would be undone for ever! Is it not past reckoning, how oft your heart hath thus deceived you? And is it not plain that the word of God knows your heart better than you do, declaring it to be *deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*?—Does not sad experience show you, that the devil, who heads and leads the nations of lusts and corruptions, hath the advantage of the ground; and knows how to correspond with your corruption, and suits his temptation to your natural temper, to your calling and company, and predominant inclination, and even to your retirement and solitude; and that

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he can even then most dangerously tempt, when the temptation is least seen and discovered; and that by his temptation he drives not only at the bringing sin to the thoughts, but to the act. for putting some blot upon your walk and conversation?—Does not sad experience shew you, that it is hard to *stand* about the fire, and not be *burnt*; and that the temptation, which at a distance seemed small, upon a nearer approach you have found had more bands upon your heart than you could have dreamed it would have had; and how impossible it is many times to stop the current to which, through unwatchfulness, you have given a vent?—Does not sad experience witness how the power and prevalence of *corruption* hath consumed the vitals of your spiritual life, and tumbled down headlong into confusion; especially when you have given conscience a wramp, by doing violence to light, in siding with the enemies, and adventuring on the occasions of a temptation?—When you have gone with Peter to the high priest's hall, without a warrant or a call, hath it not cost you dear, inasmuch that you have found bold sinning hath made faint believing, and turned all your comfort to the door, leaving nothing behind but bitterness and death?—Do you not find your sins have a *weakening, captivating, vexing, and tormenting power*?—But many sad experiences of this sort, and thousands of them in their lifetime, may even the Israel of God have, whereby they find, to their cost, the nations of corruptions are alive and powerful; as this gradual conquest *by little and little* declares.

(2.) It shows also, that they have many *sweet experiences* on the other hand, of little succours and auxiliaries, supplies from heaven, whereby the enemy is driven out and destroyed from time to time, and this all the days of their life also, till the warfare be accomplished at death. I am speaking of these that have been brought to the field of battle, as I shewed before; and how the Lord, by little and little, makes the nations of lusts sometimes to flee before them: but by how many *littles* in the believer's lifetime the war is carried on, who can tell? And how many little recoveries, little revivings, little supplies, little supports, little strengthening meals, little finishing antidotes, little soul restoring cordials; how many of these little sweet things, or sweet little things, the Lord their God allows them from time to time, that by little and little they may win the day, it is not possible to tell they are so many. The poor fighting believer may get a thousand of them in a year, and ten thousands of them in his life-time, and may be more than half a score of them at one communion. Sometimes he gets a little new discovery of the *glorious captain*, after



after he hath been long out of sight, and hiding himself: and a new sight of the glory of the Lord fills the Israelites heart with new life and courage, and hope of prevailing; for then he sees Christ to be a full magazine of all military provision, and an open magazine to give out armour for the war; and so he becomes *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. Indeed, so many little glances of the glory of Christ that the believer gets, so many little victories does he get over the enemy. Again, sometimes he gets a little *outpowering of the Spirit of prayer*, and of the spirit of adoption, crying, *Abba Father*. O Father, may he say, pity a poor child, pity a poor child, harrassed with the devil, and captivated by the power of indwelling lusts and corruptions. O but this gives the believer a little ease and relief, when he can get his heart poured out into the bosom of his best and most glorious friend, and complaining of the tyranny of the tempter, and the prevailing wit of the nations. Here is a little victory, when he gets a little grace to put the enemies of his soul into the hands of his captain, saying, Vengeance, Lord; vengeance be executed upon these enemies, enemies that dishonour thy name, and disturbing the peace of my soul.—Again, sometimes he gets a little discovery of the *enemy's power and policy*, and strongest holds; so as, knowing the depths of Satan, and not being ignorant of his devices, the believer is thereby put in case to be upon his guard: and especially he is made to see and observe the old man of sin, that deadly cut-throat, that lies within his bosom; and while he is bemoaning himself with Ephraim, crying out with Paul, *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?* the enemy is losing ground. Again, sometimes he gets a little *communication of life*, after a deadness of spirit that seized him; and a little recovery, after a fit of the falling sickness and backsliding; and the new communication of life and health to the soul, makes him start up to his feet again, and pursue the enemy with more vigour and resolution than ever, like a man that grows stronger after his sickness than he was before. Indeed, that spiritual sickness of the believer is not unto death, but unto the glory of God; which his being recovered from, makes him fight more courageously, and watch more carefully against the enemy than ever he did.—Again, sometimes he gets a little *grip of a promise*, such as that, *I will subdue thine iniquity; sin shall not have dominion over thee; fear not, for I am with thee; The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly*: and having these promises, he is encouraged to the holy war, namely, to *cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord*.

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the promise grips his heart, and therein he sees that the strength of Israel is engaged to carry him through the host of his enemies. And thus, every little grip of a promise by faith, is a little victory; there needs no more to give a chase to the enemy, than a little upstirring of faith on a promising God in Christ, and dependence on him under the conduct of his spirit. — Again, sometimes he gets a little grace to wait upon the Lord while the promise is not yet accomplished, until he bring forth judgment unto victory; and *the Lord is a God of the judgment, blessed are they that wait for him: he that believeth, shall not make haste*; knowing *the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong*; and hence the believer will find that his strength is to sit still, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. — Again, sometimes he gets a little godly sorrow, that works repentance unto life; gospel repentance, issuing from a sight of a crucified Christ, brings along with it a train of artillery for subduing the enemy, 2 Cor. vii. *What carefulness does it work, says the apostle; yea, what abhorring of ourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what revenge?* When the heart is melting before the Lord in godly sorrow, O what revenge is it meditating against the nations of lusts and corruptions! O how glad would the believer be then to wash his hands in the blood of all his spiritual enemies! for at the same time he gets a little resentment of his own ingratitude, saying, *O do I thus requite the Lord, O foolish and unwise?* A little holy shame; and blushing before the Lord, at the thoughts of his own brutishness, saying, *Behold I am vile*; and a little soul demeanment, casting indignity upon himself, and giving glory to the Lord, saying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog, I am a beast, I am a devil, but yet I come to thee to cast out the devil, and get glory to thy name.* Further, sometimes he gets a little intimation of peace and pardon, a little sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon the conscience, to purge it from dead works; and a little application of that blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin: and this bloody banner of the Lamb, being displayed, makes the nations to flee before him; *they overcome by the blood of the Lamb.* Sometimes they get a little opening of the heart, like Lydia, at the hearing of the word; insomuch that their hearts, that were dead within them like a stone, or never they are aware take life and needfire, with a word of grace, a word of power; and the more the heart opens to let in the king of glory, the more is the enemy shut out. Sometimes they get a little freedom and boldness at the throne of grace, when they come thither to obtain mercy, and find grace and help in time of need: and when there they get a little strength

strength to wrestle with the Lord for a blessing, saying, *Lord, I will not let thee go till thou bless me*; they get even power with God himself, as it is said of Jacob, Hof. xii. 4. *He had power over the Angel, and prevailed*. And when a man is an overcomer in this sense, to have power with God; much more will he have power over the nations of enemies, Rev. ii. 26. *To him that overcometh, will I give power over the nations*. Sometimes they get a little *anointing* of the oil of gladness wherewith Christ is anointed above his fellows, and then the joy of the Lord is their strength; and a little shower of the sanctifying and comforting influences of the spirit of Christ, for watering their graces, and drowning their corruptions. Sometimes they get a little *look* and *blink* of the kind and compassionate eye of Christ, even after a denial, as he gave to Peter; and when they find him thus graciously looking to them, and kindly rebuking them, they go out and weep bitterly; and while they are shedding the tears of faith, they are shedding the blood of their enemies. Sometimes they get a little *back look* upon an old experience of the Lord's putting the enemy to flight before them, saying, *I will remember thee from the land of Jordan and of the Hermonites, and from the hill of Mizar*. Or little back look upon an old promise that the Lord gave them with power: and when they are helped to plead it, saying, *Lord, remember the word on which thou hast caused me to hope*, the enemy gets a new dash. Sometimes they get a little opening of the *door of hope* in the valley of Achor, the lively hope of the heavenly Canaan through the resurrection of Christ: and this hope is the sinews of the holy war; for, as *hope makes not ashamed*, so *he that hath this hope purifies himself*; and, according to the measure of this hope, is the measure of victory. Sometimes they get a little pull of the *cord of love*, so as to get the love of God shed abroad upon their heart, and then the love of Christ constrains them; the love of the captain draws them to the field, where love is the signal for war, Christ's love I mean: *His banner over me was love*, says the church. His love both leads the van, and fences the rear; and when the flame of his love to them kindles a flame of love in their hearts to him, then a flaming sword is drawn in the face of the enemy, the banner of love beats down the nations.—Again, they sometimes get a little *spiritual* sense to carry on the spiritual war; for instance, sometimes a little hearing of the voice of Christ, so as to know the sweet and powerful sound of it among a thousand voices; and then their heart leaps within them, saying, *It is the voice of my beloved; behold he cometh skipping upon the mountains, and leaping upon the hills*. Sometimes they get a



little *touch* of the hem of Christ's garment by faith, a little touch of his name, his offices, his blood, his righteousness, or whatever hem it be; virtue comes from him to stop the bloody issue, and stop the enemy's motion. Sometimes they get a little *taste* that the Lord is gracious, and it is like the taste of Jonathan's honey-comb; the more they taste of the honey of free grace, the greater is the slaughter they make among the Philistines. Sometimes they get a little *smell* of the rose of Sharon, and the lillie of the valley, and it restores their fainting soul: all Christ's garments are said to *smell of aloes, myrrh, and cassia*; and the believer may be said to get a smell of the raiment, a smell of the rose, when Christ is precious to him above all things; and when all these spiritual senses are exercised, then they may be said to be exercising their arms, and making havock among their enemies, and gaining ground upon them. In a word, he gives them sometimes a little *breathing* in the air of spiritual meditation: *my meditation of him shall be sweet*; and when Christ is sweet sin is bitter, and the battle against it is a bitter battle. He gives them *here a little, and there a little*; and by little and little puts out the nations before them.

I have mentioned many particulars; but yet there is no speaking of all the littles that believers will experience during the time of their warfare: only, thus you see how by little and little their captain brings them to the field of battle, and how by little and little he carries on the conquest in their hand; it is the Lord their God alone that does it; it is he that conquered their enemies; it is he that helps them to chase the conquered, for it is he that bought their armour; he bought their shield, and sword, and breast plate, and helmet; and it is he that, as he bought them with his blood, so he puts on their weapons, and girds them with strength for war. It is he that rubs off the rust off their arms, when at any time they are out of use, by blowing up their graces, and giving them strength to exercise grace; and it is he that carries on the victory to perfection, by *giving power to the saint; and to him that hath no might, he increaseth strength*, from time to time, till in death he end the warfare, by driving out all the nations, so as never to be seen again. *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little.*

VI. The *sixth* thing proposed was to give the *reasons* of the doctrine. It might here be asked, 1. Why *the Lord their God*, and he alone, does put out the nations before them? Why, he alone can do it, for he is the Lord; they would never be put out, if he did it not, and he alone will do it, because he is *their* God, and thus stands engaged by promise

and covenant so to do. *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee.* But, 2. Why will he do it so gradually, by little and little? Why does he let enemies live without and within live to annoy his people? Seeing it is easy for him to destroy them all instantly, why will he destroy them gradually, by little and little? There is much of infinite wisdom to be observed in this disposal; and therefore I would offer some particulars for representing the beauty of this method.

1. It is by little and little he puts them out, without destroying them at once, that by them he may *prove* his people, Judges ii. 21. Some Canaanites were still left remaining, to prove whether they will keep the way of the Lord. These Canaanites were enemies to their peace, enemies to their profession, that sought their body's overthrow, and their soul's ruin; and they are left to prove, whether they will cleave still to God's command, or whether they will follow the abominations of the wicked. Observe it, then, first, we must look to find enemies; outward enemies to the peace of the church, and to the truth of the gospel; inward enemies to the graces and comforts of the soul: and this combat, thus continued in Israel, serves to prove whether our graces be counterfeit or not; for they only are true Israelites, that are still taking up arms against the devil, the world, and the flesh, and all the nations of Canaanites. By this, then, it is evident who are true Israelites, and who not.

2. It is by little and little that he will put out the nations before Israel, that thus they may be still *learning* to exercise their arms: I mean, that their graces may be exercised, and particularly their militant graces. There are some graces would be for little or no use, if no Canaanites and corruptions were left: the special use of faith, hope, and patience, is for helping the believer to surmount the difficulties that are now in his way. Many other graces there are, that there would be no use for, if all our enemies and corruptions were destroyed at once. Triumphant graces, such as love and joy in their perfection, would make a perfect heaven; but there are militant graces, that must be exercised also, while we are on earth, and which there will be no use for in heaven: for example, if all wants were supplied fully, there would be no need of poverty of spirit; if all sins were wholly destroyed, there would be no need of godly sorrow; if death were already swallowed up of victory, there would be no need of the desire of death, nor of the desire of heaven; if visions were already come, there would be no need of faith, as it is a militant grace, fighting its way many times through doubts and fears, and want of sight and sense; if fruition were come, there would be no need of

of hope: if all trouble were at an end, there would be no need of patience; but this shield of faith, and helmet of hope, and other parts of the Christian armour, must be exercised; therefore the nations are not wholly destroyed, but by little and little. Again,

3. It is by little and little they are put out, for the *advantage* of the militant saints in many respects: as it is fit they should fight before they triumph, and that they war as soldiers on earth before they reign as kings in heaven: since *no man is crowned, except he strive lawfully*, 1 Tim. ii. 5. So it tends to enhance heaven, and make them prize and value it the more, when it is attained through many difficulties, troubles, and oppositions; and by this means they come to have some sweet conformity to their blessed captain of salvation, who was *made perfect through sufferings*; and it is their honour to tread his steps, who *endured the contradiction of sinners* against himself, and fought his way. This contributes also to the believer's comfort at the issue of every conflict, as a safe haven is very comfortable to a mariner that hath been tost at sea. This method serves not only for the believer's comfort, but for his instruction and correction; for his instruction, because thus he learns more and more to be humble and dependent: all boasting is excluded by this means, while he finds his enemies still living, and lively, and strong; for he looks with an humble eye upon himself, knowing his own utter insufficiency for grappling with these enemies and difficulties, and oppositions in his way; and with a dependent eye upon Christ, that his grace may be sufficient for him, and his strength perfected in weakness: thus he glories in his infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon him. And as it is advantageous for their necessary instruction, so for their necessary correction, when they are sparing and remiss in using the means, and improving the advantages for driving out the Canaanites, indulging the flesh and the corruptions thereof; as it is said of Israel, Num. xxxiii. 55. If they would not drive out the inhabitants of the land, then it should come to pass, that those which they let remain should be pricks in their eyes, and thorns in their sides, to vex them. This is one of the severest ways of chastising them, when, to reprove them for one sin and lust, he lets them fall into the hands of another; and yet, in mercy to the true Israel of God, curing their disease in the issue; as he let Peter fall into a threefold pit among his enemies hands, for curing his self-confidence. One would think the cure was worse than the disease; but our Lord hath sometimes very fearful ways of correcting and curing the souls of his own people.



4. It is by little and little that the Lord puts out the nations before them, to commend the excellency of the deliverance that we have by Christ. Though there be no condemnation to them that are in Christ, yet, for their humiliation, God suffers their enemies to live among them, and for to live in them, and oft times to afflict them, that they may know the benefit they have by grace, while they make continual recourse to him for help. It is but little we can take up at once, by reason of our want of capacity; therefore, he gives one deliverance at this time, and another deliverance at that time, and a third deliverance at another time, and so on from time to time, that we may know how much we are obliged to him.

5. He delivers by little and little to shew the *greatest* of his glory, as the captain of salvation. He shews the glory of his power, in keeping us, notwithstanding the great danger we are continually in, while the enemy is alive within us, without us, and round about us. How greatly does his power appear, in preserving the tossed ark amidst all the waves and billows of adversity that dash against it, and in keeping the burning bush from being consumed? He shews the glory of his triumphant arms, like some famous conquerors in battle, who, though they may, yet will not put all their enemies to the edge of the sword, but will take some captives, and others they will keep alive against their days of triumph, and then to suffer death, to the greater shame of the conquered, and greater glory of the conqueror. When Joshua had discomfited these five kings that fought against Gibeon, Josh. 10. he would not slay them instantly, but shut them up in a cave closely, intending, when the battle was fully ended, to put them to death openly: so our great general and captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, *he strikes through kings in the day of his wrath; he leads captivity captive*: he shuts up some of the kings and commanders of the hellish nations into the cave of the heart, where they may rage, yet they cannot rule any more; and at last crowns the solemnity of his triumph, by making a shew of them openly, and destroying them utterly.

6. He destroys them by little and little, that he may counterplot the enemies in their own plot, and fight them with their own weapons. It is the plot of hell, by little and little to destroy sinners, yea, and to wear out the saints of the most high, Dan. vii. 25. by one temptation on the back of another; therefore, by little and little the Lord will defeat the design of the devil, and take the wise in their own craftiness. The wisdom of heaven can easily counterplot the policy of hell. Yea, thus he fights the enemy, and beats him with his own weapons. The tempter comes sometimes, and bruises the believer.

believer's heel, as he did Christ's; upon which the believer is stirred up to look again to him that was bruised for his iniquity, and then the devil is sure to get as good as he gave; for the bruised heel he gets a broken head. May be some temptation gives the believer a trip, and down he falls; but the wise captain makes use of that very fall for giving the devil and his host a greater foil than ever; for, after that fall, the believer goes alone, with Peter, and weeps it out, and watches and prays, and fights better than he did before.

7. It is by little and little that the Lord conquers the nations of enemies in the way to the heavenly Canaan, because by little and little his people must be made ready for it; Exod. xxiii. 30. *By little and little I will drive them out before thee, till thou be increased, and inherit the land.* As the Canaanites had kept possession till Israel was grown into a people; so there were to be some remains of them, till Israel should grow so numerous as to replenish the whole. The land of Canaan had room enough to receive Israel; but Israel was not yet numerous enough to possess Canaan: even so here, the true Israel of God must be made ready for the heavenly Canaan, before they come there. They are not always in actual readiness; therefore there is some good service they have to do for their captain, some battle they have to fight with the enemy. They must have some more experience, and learn some more lessons; therefore their possession of Canaan is delayed till they be ready for it.

8. It is by little and little that the Lord drives out the nations before them, lest the beasts of the field increase upon them, to allude to that word which immediately follows the text, which we have also, Exod. xxiii. 9. *I will not drive them out before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee.* And thus it is with the children of God; if they had not enemies without and within, and oppositions in their way, there are some dangerous beasts that would be ready to increase upon them: for instance, there is a beast they call *pride*, that might grow upon you, if you had no enemies to fight with; and while yet you are not ready for heaven, and sanctification is incomplete. Hence a *thorn in the flesh* was given to Paul, *that he might not be exalted above measure.* Is not the thorn in the flesh well ordered, that prevents confidence in the flesh?—There is a beast they call *security*, might grow upon you, but now enemies are on all hands of you, to prevent your falling asleep, and to keep you watching and waking. There is a beast they call *presumption* that might grow upon you, and make you think you were able to go forward to heaven.

upon your own legs, and in your own strength, if you found no such enemy in the way. There is another beast they call *worldly mindedness* that might grow upon you; if you got no adversaries nor adversities to vex you, and wean you from the world, you would be in danger of saying, *It is good to be here*: but now the wars and battles in your way to heaven, make you say with your heart, *O! it is better to be there*. There is a beast, a filthy brute beast, that they call *sensuality*, that might grow upon you, believer, that might make you lukewarm and formal in all your duties, as well as carnal, and light and vain in the intervals of duties: but the sight of your spiritual enemies on the field, will make you to see a need to be spiritual, zealous, earnest, and  *fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*. There is also a filthy dumb beast, that they call *forgetfulness*, that would certainly grow upon your heart, and be very dangerous to your soul and spiritual warfare. If your enemies were all destroyed; therefore God says, *Psalm lxx. 18. Slay them not, lest my people forget*. If the execution were quick and hasty, the impressions of it would not be deep and durable. Swift destructions startle men for the present, but they are soon forgotten; therefore, when we think that God's judgments upon the nations of our spiritual enemies come on but very slowly, we must conclude, that God hath wise and holy ends in that gradual procedure; *Slay them not, lest my people forget*. They would forget to pray, if they had not enemies to pray against; they would forget to praise him, if they had not still new deliverances to praise him for; they would forget to pity those that are afflicted and tossed with tempests like themselves; they would forget their captain, and their duty of living by faith and dependence on him; they would forget to take with their proper name, saying, *Truth, Lord, I am a dog*, &c. they would forget to mourn for sin, and repent; they would forget their own weakness, and their deliverer's power; and, like Jeshurun in prosperity, would *war, fat, and forget God that made them, and lightly esteem the rock of their salvation*; they would forget to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, at the side of the red sea of the Lamb's blood, where their enemies are always drowned; even to sing, saying, *The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, and the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea; the Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name*, *Exod. xv. 1, 2, 3, &c.* They would forget to speak of the wonders of his mercy from time to time, and to give him the glory due unto his name; they would forget to employ him upon every new attack of the enemy, saying, *Lord, thou hast delivered, and dost deliver, and in thee we trust that thou wilt deliver*. — Better the



the enemy live and rage, and be not utterly destroyed, than that Christ want employment at your hand, and get not the glory of executing his saving office in your time of need. You would hardly think that so much advantage should accrue to the Israel of God, by the nations of their enemies not being destroyed at once, but by little and little. You see some of the filthy beasts that would increafe upon you, if the Lord did not spare some of your spiritual enemies, devils, and lusts, which, though they may be called all beasts together, yet therein shines infinite wisdom in sparing one beast to destroy another, one corruption to devour another: he may let carnality live in a believer sometimes, to kill his *pride*; much ignorance remain to kill his *self-wisdom*; much wandering in, and indisposition for duty, to kill his *self-righteousness*. Now as it is with believers in particular, so with the church in general: why does God suffer tyrants, and atheists, and hypocrites, and hereticks to live among them, and vex them, but for reaching many, if not all, of those ends that I have been naming? When the church was in adversity under the primitive ten persecutions, then religion flourished; the life of the tyrant tended to the life of religion in the persecuted church: but when the Roman emperors became Christian, and friendly to the church, then pride and security crept in with their prosperous state; the beasts of the field increased so much, that by degrees a blasphemous beast assumes the very name and office of being *the head of the church*, even a *beast with seven heads and ten horns*, mentioned, Rev. xiii. I mean the Roman Antichrist. And then why hath a nation of hereticks, with their erroneous principles and doctrines, been spared and continued in the church from time to time, but that the friends of truth might have occasion to clear and vindicate it, and to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints? There must be heresies, says the apostle, that they that are approved may be made manifest; there must be errors, that truth may be the more easily discovered and maintained. Some precious truths had never been set into such a clear light, if opposite errors had not been vented for darkening the same. Thus our covenant obligations in Scotland are denied by some, that their obligation may be the more asserted by others: thus also there is an ungodly nation left alive, that the godly may be distinguished from them, and exercised the more unto godliness; and a hypocritical nation, that true Israelites, that are fit indeed, may try themselves, and become the more sincere and upright.

The application now remains to be spoken to. It is so, that as the true Israel of God have nations in their way to the possession

session of the heavenly Canaan; so the Lord their God will conquer these nations by little and little.

1<sup>st</sup>, It may be applied in a word of *Exhortation and caution*, in these four particulars:

1. Beware of thinking that you may safely *neglect the means*, because this work of putting out the nations belongs wholly to the Lord. This were a lazy Antimonian conclusion, drawn from such premises as rather bear the greatest encouragement in the world to make a diligent use of the means. If it be a good reason of *working out our salvation with fear and trembling*, that *the Lord works in us both to will and to do*, which is the apostle's argument, Phil. ii. 12. 13, then it is as good a reason for warring, and using all the means necessary for accomplishing this spiritual warfare, that it is the Lord our God that conquers the enemy for us by little and little. Yea, this is such a necessary consideration, that, take away this argument, and there remains no encouragement to use the means at all: and hence it is only believers that are capable of this spiritual warfare, and only believers in Christ that are capable of the right and diligent use of the means that relate thereunto; for they cannot be used duly, but in the faith of this encouragement, *The Lord thy God will go before thee*, to conquer the nations of enemies in your way. Unbelievers, indeed, ought to use the means, because the Lord commands the use thereof; and therefore, for the Lord's sake, neglect no commanded duty and ordinance wherein the Lord uses to be found. But yet, I say again, never will any soul use the means aright and acceptably, till something of the real true faith of this encouragement excite him: therefore, O believers! neglect not to read, and hear, and pray, and meditate, and use all commanded duties and ordinances; for there you must expect to meet with your captain, that hath engaged to put out the nations before thee.

2. Beware of thinking that the *stress* of the warfare lies upon you, because you are obliged to use the means; and that it is your using the means that will do the business. As the former is a lazy, so this is a legal thought, and as pernicious and destructive as the other; for, if you lean upon the means, and think that your reading, praying, hearing, and the like, will drive out the nations, bring down the body of death, or subdue one corruption; that were a beating of your enemies with a sword of straw: such a fleshly weapon will never draw blood of your spiritual enemies; and, instead of getting victory over your sins by such legal weapons, you are brought under greater bondage: *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse*; and to be under the law, is to be under the

dominion.

method, then, were to be opening a fore door to let out the enemy, and at the same time opening a back door to let them in, dominion of sin, for *the strength of sin is the law*. This legal and that with more advantage to you than ever. As it is a dangerous extreme to neglect means, upon pretext that Christ must do all, since his doing all is the greatest encouragement thereunto; so it is as dangerous on the other hand to use means, upon a notion that you must do all, or that the weight of the warfare depends upon you, and your duties; for your entertaining that notion, is the greatest discouragement in the world to the use of the means, and gives your enemies the greatest advantage against you, even in that wherein you think to defeat them.

3. Beware of thinking that you may lawfully enter into a league with any of your enemies, because they are not to be destroyed but by little and little. See what God says to Israel with respect to the Canaanites, verse 2d of the chapter where the text lies, and elsewhere: *Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy to them*. While we are shewing that sanctification and mortification is not perfected in the saints while they are here, and that the nations of lusts, even in their hearts, are not all to be destroyed in this world; some carnal heart may be ready to think, my blessing on the minister, who by this doctrine makes me think I may win to heaven, though my lusts be not all destroyed, and though I indulge myself in some of the pleasures of the flesh; and I hope I may have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, adding drunkenness to thirst, and one sin to another. Say you so, man, woman? I must tell you, that your speech betrays you; that you are not an Israelite bound to the heavenly Canaan; for, cursed is that peace that is consistent with a standing league and covenant with any lust whatsoever. Such are in covenant with death, and at agreement with hell; and, *There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked*. The children of God dare not maintain a league with any lust, nor will they shew mercy on their most darling lusts: nay, as it is said of some, that their tender mercies are cruelly, so I may say of the believer in this case that his most tender mercy toward his most beloved lust is cruelly: when he acts like himself, he is so cruel hearted, he would cut the throat of it, if he could, and even of all his lusts.

4. Beware of thinking that believers have no advantage against the nations of their enemies, sins, and lusts, more than others, because they are not utterly destroyed: nor let believers themselves think, that, because their deliverance is not effected presently, therefore it will never be effected; for the

Lord



Lord their God is upon the destroying work, only he will take his own time and his own way to his own work, and his time and way both are the best. *The Lord thy God will do it by little and little.* Hence a believer may be getting advantage, and gaining ground upon corruptions and lusts, even when he feels them stirring and raging most violently. It may be they have got a dead stroke for all that; as a beast that hath got a death's blow, may get out of grips, and turn more mad than ever, and yet will die at length of the same blow. The devil may rage most when he knows that his time is short, and that he will be soon cast out. Corruption is not always strongest, when its motions are most felt; it may be strongest, when the strength of it is not seen.

Our second use may be for information. Many things might here be inferred; as,

1. Hence we may see the *privilege* even of a *visible church*, whom the Lord hath not utterly forsaken, though *filled with sin*, as it is said, Jer. ii. 5. As they have the Lord for their God, in the sense that I explained before, and as Israel here was privileged; so, by virtue of that relation to God as their God, they may have manifold mercies in common among them, as mixed visible churches beyond the rest of the world: the Lord may appear for them against the heathen nations that are about them, and that are among them; and he may do great things for them, by virtue of that relation that he stands in to them as their God, and they his professing people. As this text relates to Israel of old literally, it represents a privilege common to all the people, namely, the Lord's driving out the nation of the Canaanites before them; and may we not say, the Lord hath in like manner dealt with us, particularly in the church of Scotland, several times? As the Lord planted a church here very early, not many years after Christ's ascension; so by little and little he drove out the heathen nations before us: when our own forefathers were a race of blind pagans, here the Lord destroyed that idolatry, and gradually enlarged his church, till in process of time, popery entering in, we were over-run with antichristian nations. But, lo! when the time to favour Zion was come; I mean, the time of the reformation from popery, the Lord was pleased to drive out these nations before us *by little and little*, and gradually carried on the reformation work, and that by the method of solemnly covenanting with him, and this covenanting work was carried on *by little and little*, again and again, till the whole nation came under solemn obligations this way. As Israel avouched the Lord to be their God, by solemn covenants that were binding and obligatory upon them and their posterity,

ty after them, so in this duty of vowing to the Lord, which is a moral duty, and consequently incumbent on the church of God under the new, as well as old dispensation, and not like the types and shadows that were to be done away: In this moral duty, I say, we in our forefathers followed the example of the church of God in scripture, by entering into a solemn covenant with him; which work the Lord, in many signal ways, countenanced with his presence, in the remarkable effusion and out-pouring of the spirit, to the conversion of multitudes. It is the glory of a church, when God avouches them for his people, by the external dispensation of the covenant of grace; and it is also the glory of the church, when they avouch God to be their God, in a solemn covenant of duty and service. This was a part of Scotland's glory, attended with internal displays of the power and glory of God in the sanctuary. To prove the obligation of these covenants upon posterity to all generations, were, I suppose, needless in this auditory; neither would time allow me to insist here; but, I think, to disparage these covenants, and to deny the obligation thereof, is to cast dung upon our glory, and to tread our honour in the dust; yea, I think it worse than the breaking, and burning, and burying of them; for a broken covenant may be mended again, a burnt covenant may come forth out of the furnace again, yea, a buried covenant may rise again, when God raises up a reformation of spirit: but to bespatter the reputation of them, and impugn the obligation of them, is, I think, to render them odious to all generations, instead of binding upon them. But now, as our information was carried on *by little and little*, so, when it is under a decay in many respects, let us look to the Lord our God, that *by little and little* it may be revived again, in the Lord's own time and way.

2. As we see hence the privilege of a visible church, so the special and peculiar privilege of *the true Israel of God*, the church spiritual and invisible, though militant on earth: The Lord their God will cast out the nations before them in a spiritual sense, and that *by little and little*. May it not be said of them, as it is Deut. xxxiii. last? *Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord who is thy shield of thy help, and sword of thine excellency?* And ver. 27. *The eternal God is thy refuge, underneath are his everlasting arms: He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them.* What though all the nations of the world were against them, outward and inward; the nations of earth and of hell both? Yet he, who is the King of nations, is for them; and, if God be for them, who can be against them? He can destroy nations for their sake. *I gave Egypt*

*Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.* The nations may fight, but cannot prevail; nay, the gates of hell can never prevail against them. Why? They have the Lord for their God, and their God is their guard: and as the common relation that God stands in to a mixed visible church, entitles them to many privileges while that relation stands, so the special relation that the true Israel of God stands in to him as their God in Christ, by a spiritual indissoluble union, intitles them to all spiritual blessings and spiritual deliverances. However difficult and dangerous their way to the heavenly Canaan is, by reason of the numerous opposing nations, which they can never destroy of themselves: yet their God and captain leads the van, and drives out the nations before them.

3. See here the miserable case of the nations that *know not God*, and are *enemies* to the people of God. Why, like the cursed Canaanites, they are devoted to destruction: they vex themselves in vain, when they fight against the Lord and his anointed. The Lord God of Israel is to drive them out; he will drive them to hell, that continue in enmity against God and his people. *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.* Yea, the greatest misery of all the wicked, that remain in a Christless state, lies in this, though they do not see it to be their misery, namely, that they are under the power of all the nations of hell, under the power of the devil and of their lusts, and in league with the nations that oppose the true Israel of God in their way to the heavenly Canaan.

4. Hence we may see the reason of the *multiplied experiences* of the believer, both sad and sweet; because the nations are cast out before him *by little and little*, and not utterly destroyed while he is here. Hence may sad tales he hath to tell of the nations compassing him about, iniquity prevailing against him; and lusts again and again, and a thousand times staring, and working, and warring, and overthrowing him, and treading upon him: and, on the other hand, notwithstanding all this, he hath many sweet tales to tell of the Lord's humbling and healing, convincing and converting him; many convictions, many conversions does he get from time to time; and the next conviction more deep than the former, and the next conversion more sweet than the former; and one conversion on the back of another, because of one defection on the back of another, through the power of the nations of hell within and without him. As a dying saint, that was asked, when he was converted? said, he had been converted an hundred times; so in this sense it is possible some believers of long standing may be converted a hundred times, and a hundred too. That saints may



may need conversion, is plain from what Christ said to Peter that was saint, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*. Yea, every new conversion of the believer may be more remarkable than any other, while the Lord is thus by *little and little* destroying the enemy; because every touch of the nations of power and policy is drawing him aside from the Lord, and the recurring power and corruption, is so horrible and monstrous to him, that he thinks with himself, O! will ever the Lord return again to the like of me? And when the Lord returns, he wonders more than ever.

Hence we may see why there is no *justification* by the *deeds of the law*, nor *mortification* by the *means of the law*; no justification by legal works, nor sanctification and mortification by legal means. How does this follow, say you? Indeed it is plain, there can be no justification by the deeds of the law; for the best believer on earth must own, that at best he hath two nations in his womb, and the company of two armies; an army of lusts, and an army of grace; *the flesh lust- ing against the spirit*, as well as *the spirit against the flesh*; and when he finds a nation of lusts and corruptions in his womb in his heart, can he expect to be justified by the deeds of the law, by a legal righteousness of his own? No: he is made content to be obliged to grace, free grace, through the righteousness of Christ for justification. And as there is no justification by legal works, so there is no mortification by legal means; they never saw the power of corruption that are not convinced of this, that nothing in the world but the power of God can destroy it. *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little*. O! pity ignorant papists, that think their whipping, and scourging, and beating themselves will do it: pity ignorant professors, that think their fasting, and praying, and legal endeavours will do it. It is true, our Lord speaks of some devils that go not out but by *fasting and prayer*: not that these means of themselves do it; nay, let our Lord explain his own word, *The Lord thy God will put out the nations*, he will subdue your iniquities: such things *go not forth but by fasting and prayer*; that is, by Christ Jesus sought and found in these means. Neglect not the means, then; but for the Lord's sake remember, that if you go forth against lusts in the strength of means, or only with a verbal mention of the strength of Christ, without ever having taken off with his glorious captain, or being joined to him in order to draw strength from him, your leviathan lusts will but laugh at the shaking of your spear. Therefore,

6. Hence you may see where the believer's *strength* lies.— You heard before where the strength of the enemy lies; but

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now,

now, where lies the strength of the Israel of God? Even in the God of Israel, the King of Israel: *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee.* Psalm lxxiii. 26. *My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* My outward advantages, inward vigour, and all fail me; but my God will not fail me. More particularly, Israel's strength lies in God, as manifesting himself in Christ. There are two things in Christ that strength lies in, for the believer's safety and deliverance from the power of sin, and victory over the nations of lusts and devils: one is the blood of Christ; we *overcome by the blood of the Lamb*; the death of Christ was the death of sin, for he nailed sin to the cross, and destroyed the devil's power: another is the spirit of Christ, who being in the believer, *greater is he that is in them, than he that is in the world*; and the spirit mortifies sin. Here lies the believer's great strength for actual mortification of sin, and victory over it, Rom. viii. 13. *If ye through the spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* And the spirit carries on this work,

(1.) By the application of the *death of Christ* to the soul; for it is the virtue flowing forth from the death of Christ that destroys sin; and the spirit implies that virtue, and implants the soul to Christ, that being ingrafted in him, and united to him, the sin-killing, soul-quickenings virtue of Christ aye flows in to the believer.

(2.) By the *implantation of grace*, and of grace contrary to corruption. In opposition to *unbelief*, he implants *faith*; in opposition to *enmity*, he implants *fortitude* and *spiritual courage*.

(3.) By the *excitation* of the grace that he hath implanted; which, though it be active in itself, yet, by reason of our indisposition, needs to be whetted and actuated; when the spirit lets grace alone, sin revives and gathers strength.

(4.) By drawing forth faith especially to a lively exercise; and then *this is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith*; while the spirit of faith draws forth the grace of faith: for faith carries up the soul to him in whom strength lies, and then says, *I can do all things through Christ strengthening me*; and faith employs the strength of Christ against the strength of the enemy, and so triumphs in its noble general, being *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*. Faith begets in the soul antipathy against all sins and lusts, purifying the heart, and setting it directly against sin.—Tell a carnal heart sin lies at the door, Why, let it come in, it is a friend of mine; but tell a believer, exercising faith, that there is sin in such a thing, O! it is an abomination. Faith discovers

discovers the danger the soul is in by the nations of lusts that encompass it, and excites all the faculties of the soul to rise up against it, saying, *Rise, Samson, for the Philistines are upon thee*; canst thou sleep in the midst of troops and armies of lusts? And so it rouses the soul to sigh, and groan, and pant, and pray, and cry, and wrestle; and so to overcome, under the standard of the glorious captain.

The *third* use is for *examination*. Hence we may see matter for trying of our state by. What is the mark of a candidate for heaven, a traveller to Canaan? Why, the Lord his God is driving out the nations before him *by little and little*. Is the battle with the nations begun? And is the Lord gradually carrying it on?

Quest. *How shall I know that?*

You may take a mark or two out of the bosom of the text.

1. Have got a *view* of the *nations* that are in your way? I mean, a view and discovery of your corruption, your original and actual sin, and your natural bondage and slavery by reason thereof? Have you seen nations of lusts within you? and have you seen them to be such powerful nations, that nothing but the power of omnipotence can drive out? And, consequently, have you seen your own utter impotency to drive them out of yourself? Have you seen them to be such politick nations, and so fraudulent, that nothing but the infinite wisdom of God could counteract this policy of hell; knowing your heart to be *deceitful above all things*, as well as *desperately wicked*? Have you seen them to be such spiritual nations, *spiritual wickednesses in high places*, that no carnal weapon could avail in this warfare, but only such *spiritual weapons as are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*? Have you seen them to be such numerous nations, that your name is legion, a legion of lusts, a legion of devils, that nothing but a word from Jesus can put out? Now this mark excludes all that never saw themselves, and their own natural bondage and thralldom; they are yet serving the nations, which they ought to be driving out. They that know the plagues of their own heart, and have experienced the power of these nations in their way, look more like the travellers to Canaan. But take this mark in conjunction with what follows.

2. Have you got a *discovery* of a *God in Christ*, the glorious captain of salvation, in whom alone your help and salvation lies, and who alone can put out these nations before you? Hath the *spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ* been given to you, so as to *reveal Christ in you*, and so as you have, some time or other, got *Christ in you the hope of*



glory, Christ in you the hope of victory? Have you seen Christ, as a victorious conqueror, triumphing over all the nations of spiritual enemies, *travelling in the greatness of his strength, trading the wine-press alone, when of all the people there was none with him, staining all his raiment with the blood of the enemy, and trampling them in his fury?* as this is elegantly represented, Isa. lxiii. at the beginning have you seen *help laid upon one that is mighty, one whose name is JESUS and JEHOVAH both?* JEHOVAH is his name in the first word of our text; and *his name is called JESUS, because he saves his people from their sins.* As many discoveries as you have got of the glory of Christ as the captain of salvation, so many marks of victory begun have you. But this mark excludes all that never got their eyes opened to see any form or comeliness in Christ, or any beauty wherefore they should desire him; and hence the beauty and glory of a present world bulks more in their eyes.

3. Hath the discovery of the glory of the conqueror *loosed your heart* from all other lords and lovers, and knit your heart unto him as the Lord your God, the Lord your captain, the Lord your righteousness, the Lord your strength, the Lord your salvation? *The Lord thy God will put out the nations before thee.* Now, the heart-drawing discovery of Christ, knitting the soul to him, is a great matter; for thus the believer is united to Christ by faith, and the relation constitute, so as he is the Lord thy God, thy head. Indeed, a saving discovery of God in Christ, natively brings this along with it: if thou see not God in Christ, thou cannot see him to be thy God, but rather thy enemy; but to see him in Christ, is to see him thy God and thy friend; for they that see him in Christ, they see him in whom he is well pleased; and to see God well pleased in him, is to see God as thy God. This appropriation, then, is imported in the very nature of faith, according to the measure of it; and the ground of this believing appropriation is the word of promise; *I will be thy God*, which is the great fundamental promise; and the proper echo of faith is, Amen; I will take it on thy word, that thou wilt be my God, Zech. xiii. 1st. *I will say, It is my people; and they say The Lord is my God.* There the Spirit of God declares what shall be the language of faith, when it acts like faith indeed. *The Lord is my God.* But say you, can every believer say, *The Lord is my God?* My friends, I never thought that every believer could say so, nor that any believer in the world could always say so; but as every believer is not aye believing, so I speak of what faith says when it is acting, and what the believer says when he is believing, not when he is doubting and misbelieving:

misbelieving: neither do I think that every act of faith is a saying expressly *He is my God*; but every appropriating act of faith says this upon the matter, and every heart-engaging view of God in Christ hath a *My God* wrapt up in the bosom of it, whether it dare say it expressly or not; for in Christ they see him to be a well pleased God, and a friend. You know, saving faith is thy receiving and resting on Christ for salvation, as he is offered *to thee*, in the gospel promise; and this *receiving* is no other thing than *believing*, John i. 12. and so it is a taking him on his word for salvation *to thee*, as a captain *to thee*. Take away this particular application, and it is no faith at all, and constitutes no union to him, no relation to him as *The Lord thy God*. I ask, then, if the discovery of the glory of Christ hath knit your heart to him as the glorious captain of salvation, so as you have taken on with him? Then thou art entitled to the complete victory; *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee*. This mark excludes all these that never closed with Christ by a particular believing, but satisfy themselves with a general faith, and may be called but general believers: they have no particular words on which they have been caused to hope, and no particular faith applying Christ to themselves. Such seem not yet to have entered the field of battle, nor closed with the captain.

4. Hath the Lord *begun* to put out the nations before you? Hath he begun to exert his power, by subduing your lusts? Did you never know the day wherein Satan fell like lightning, as it were, from heaven; when the strong man and his goods, that were at ease, were cast out of habitation! How was it with you in the day of believing, in the day when the Lord your God manifested himself, and appeared as a mighty conqueror to you? Got you not all your lusts and corruptions, as it were, drowned in the blood of the Lamb, so as you thought you should never see them again? You know, believer, that was a false thought, but yet it was a glad thought to you, to think you would never be under the feet of your corruptions again, and you would never dishonour the Lord as you had done; however, some time or other you have found the Lord pulling down the strong holds of unbelief, atheism, and enmity, and giving you the necks of your enemies. This looks like a good work begun, a battle begun, and a breach made upon the rule and dominion of sin. This mark excludes all these in whom sin still reigns, and in whom the glorious captain hath never so much as begun to give a blow to the enemy.

5. If you be a soldier on your march to the heavenly Canaan, then I ask you, if you have been of any considerable

standing in the Lord's way. have you not had many a *bloody battle* with the nations, and many a fearful onset by the enemy attacking you with main force, and may be taking you captive, yea, bringing you into *captivity to the law of sin that is in your members?* Rom. vii. 23. Have you not found your enemies returning with such power and prevalency, that you was ready to think that you had lost all ground that ever you had won, and lost all the victories that ever you had gained, the Canaanites prevailing against you! *Iniquities prevail against me* says David. You will think this an odd mark; for, says the believer, it is the prevalency of sin that makes me fear I am not an Israelite bound for Canaan. But stay a little till I further clear it: this mark excludes all these in whom sin and lusts have not the power of prevalency only, but the power of dominion.

*Quest.* What is the difference between the power of prevalency, and the power of dominion?

*Answer.* The power of dominion is a regal power, there sin is king; but the power of prevalency is a tyrannical power, there it is only a tyrant, whose authority is rejected: the power of dominion is a monarchical power, where sin rules alone; but the power of prevalency only is where another power is also, there are two armies on the field: the power of dominion is uncontrollable, the man sins without controul; but the power of prevalency is a resisted power, where it meets with resistance unto blood: the power of dominion is an absolute power: but the power of prevalency is a limited one, with respect to some particulars only: the power of dominion is a habitual power; but the power of prevalency is occasional only: and, in a word, the power of dominion is an entire power; but the power of prevalency is a broken power, the head of it is broken, and the back of it is broken, though it prevail. Now, to find the prevalency of the enemy, is not inconsistent with the believer's militant state, which supposes manifold inroads and incursions of the Canaanites upon him. And indeed they are not capable to feel the joy of the victory, who never feel the strength of the battle; sin reigns in the wicked, and hath too peaceable dominion with them; iniquity cannot be said to prevail against them, but rather prevails with them; it goes well enough with them, both before and after their sinning. But, O! says David and the believer, *iniquity prevails against me*; it is against my heart, against my will, against my desire, against my design, against my resolution, against my hope, against my faith, against my tears, against my prayers.

6 If you be soldiers on your march to the heavenly Canaan, then I would ask, whether or not you find the *power* of the glorious



glorious captain as necessary for your deliverance, upon every new assault of the enemy, as you ever found it before? For true Israelites, fighting their way to heaven, find more and more evidences of their own utter insufficiency, and more need of grace's all-sufficiency. O! the nations are as strong as ever, and the need of powerful succours and auxiliaries from heaven as great as ever. This is plain also from the text; it is the Lord thy God that begins the battle, and the Lord thy God that carries on the extirpation of the Canaanites. Do you find them as much need of his power to excite grace, as to work it at first; as much need of his fencing the rear, as of his leading the van? This mark excludes all these that think they have a power in their own hand, and never came out of themselves, not for righteousness and strength, into the Lord Jesus Christ: but it is encouraging to these that are saying, the exercise of grace, *I will go in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, and his only.* O! to be clothed with his righteousness, and girded with his strength, is the great desire of all the true Israelites.

7. If you be soldiers on march to the heavenly Canaan, you may try it by this, you will not only be perfect at a point in this matter, that the battle is the Lord's, and that without him you cannot give one fair stroke to the enemy; but also you will find to your experience, that by little and little the conquest is carried on, and the Canaanites driven out; and the help and assistance comes from heaven by degrees, as the sovereign general is pleased to order; though you get not all the great things you would be at, yet by little things you are carried through. Can you not say, believer, that such a place was a little *Bochim*, where you got leave to weep out your heart before the Lord, because of the prevalency of sin; and such a place was a little *Bethel*, a house of God, where you had such a measure of divine presence, as strengthened you against the enemy; such another place was a little *Paniel*, where you saw God face to face, as it were, and a sight of the captain of salvation gave the nations of hell a dash? And though, in the interval, your enemies and lusts rise up again in fury and rage against you, like to devour your soul, to devour your graces, to devour your comforts, to devour your peace; yet there comes another little recruit from heaven, that gives you a new occasion to set up an *Ebenazer* saying *Hitherto, to the Lord hath helped*; and to sing with the church, Psalm cxxix. *Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel say: many a time have they afflicted me from my youth, yet have they not prevailed against me: many a time have these Canaanites vexed me, and soiled me; yet they have not prevailed to my utter overthrow: for still, when I was brought*

brought to extremity, the Lord was a little sanctuary to me, and communicated his grace by little and little to me, in a suitableness to my need; allowing me here a little crumb of comfort, when I was like to faint in the battle; and there a little crumb of courage, when I was like to yield; and at another time a little crumb of wonderful deliverance out of the hands of mine enemies, after I was led captive by them. Why, what is the meaning of all this? It is the Lord thy God driving out these nations before thee by little and little.

The *fourth* and last use shall be a short *address* to two sorts of persons here. 1. To these that are *at peace* with the nations that stand betwixt them and the heavenly Canaan, and so are at war with heaven. 2. To these that are *making war* with the nations, and before whom the Lord hath begun to drive out the nations by little and little.

*First*, To you that are *at peace* with the nations of hell, at peace with the devil, at peace with your lusts; I would speak a word to you, 1. By way of *conviction*. 2. By way of *counsel*.

1<sup>st</sup>. For your *conviction*. It is not evident that the most part at peace with hell, being ignorant of the sin mortifying principles of the gospel, being sighters of the means of conversion, living in security under all the calls of heaven, by the word and the rod, and living in enmity against the power of godliness, indulging themselves in many known sins, and knowing no restraint from sinning taken from his nature, but from its consequents only. Are there not many here that have nations of lusts swarming in their heart, yet were never convicted of, or made to know the plagues of their own heart? Some will say they have a good heart to God, even though their mouth be filled either with cursing, lying, swearing, and flandering; or else with nothing but vain, frothy, carnal, worldly discourse. What! shall we think you have a clean heart, when you have such a foul mouth? Does not Christ say, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*? When a man sees abundance of smoke coming out at the top of a chimney, he may say, for certain that is a sign of much fire in the hearth: so, when there is nothing but vain worldly words in the mouth, we may say there is much vanity and corruptions in the heart. Carnal lips, that are not shaped for any spiritual discourse, except in hypocrisy and deceit, discover a carnal heart. O! how many here are willing slaves to the nations, the Canaanites, the lusts of the flesh! of all slaves, they are in the worst case that are sold; of these that are sold, they are in the worst case that are put in prison; of these that are in prison, they are in the worst case that are bound and

chained

chained in prison ! Yet such slaves to sin and lust are all here by nature shut up in close prison, bound and chained there, shut up under unbelief; and unbelief is such a cruel jailor, that, while you are shut up under it, it will not so much as suffer you to lift up your head, or to look up to heaven for deliverance. O how miserable is this thralldom that you are under ! for these nations that rule in you and over you now, and under which you are bearing arms against the God of heaven, will at last destroy you for ever, if they be not destroyed in time ; if they be not put out of your heart, they will keep you out of heaven ; yea, if they be not driven out of your heart, they will drive you to hell. If that legion of lusts, that now you are in league with, be not cast out of your heart by the power of that glorious captain of salvation, that cast out legions of devils out of one man : then you must lay your account with it, that like the swine possessed of the devil, you will be driven down to the sea of God's everlasting wrath, and drowned in perdition. But then,

*sally*, I would offer you a word of *counsel*. O will you break league with these cursed Canaanites, and come and take on with our glorious captain of salvation, that can drive them out before you ! O sinner, man, woman, lass, lad, you that have been a slave to the devil all your days, a slave to the numerous nations of lusts, that, as sure as God lives, will keep you out of heaven, and drive you to hell, if they be not driven out ; will you come and take on with your glorious Lord Jesus, whose office and work, as a Redeemer, is to drive out the nations before you ? Our captain-general hath sent us, as officers under him, to cry in the public meetings and assemblies of this sort, saying, *Whosoever will let him come*, and take on to be a soldier under the KING of kings, and LORD of lords, against the king of hell and nations of lusts, that would keep you out of heaven. And, as we are warranted to declare them cursed with bitter curses that will not join in this war, according to what is said of Meroz, Judges v. 12, *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they come not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD, against the mighty* : So we are warranted to declare to sinners, that there are here the greatest encouragements that ever were offered to soldiers, to excite you to take on with him. Why, he offers you money to bear all your charges ; *I counsel you to buy of me gold, tried gold* : he offers to take off your filthy garments, and clothe you with a change of raiment, the king's livery : yea, he offers you a coat of mail, that will defend you against the shot of death ; the robe of his own righteousness, a garment of salvation : he offers you further, that if you be wounded



wounded in war, he will give you a balm to heal your wound, the balm of his own blood: yea, if you take on with him, he offers to do all your works in you and for you; yea, to fight all your battles, and to drive out all the nations before you, and then to crown you as a conqueror, yea, and more than a conqueror, even though you have done nothing of yourself.—He offers to give all the armour you need for the war; do you need the *sword*, the *breast plate*, the *helmet*, the *shield*, mentioned Eph. vi. He himself is the great magazine of all the military provision; and, therefore, if you take on with him, shall want for nothing that is necessary for carrying on war to a compleat victory. O come and take on with him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; take on with him for armour, strength, victory, and all.

Why, but what mean you by taking on with him? I know not how to take on with him. Why, firs, to take on with him is to believe in him. But what am I to believe, say you, that I may take on with him? 1. You are to believe, that he is *speaking* to you, and inviting you to take on with him; even you man, woman. Let none here say that there was not a word spoken to them at Carnock: nay, I take you all to witness, that have ears to hear, that the Lord is, by the poor worm that is here preaching, speaking to every one of you, and saying, *To you, O man, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of men*; and he is bidding you take on with him. Believe that he is speaking to you, and that this gospel offer is to you.—2. You are to believe that you *cannot* believe. This were one good step towards faith, to believe that you are an unbeliever, and shut up in unbelief as in a prison, which none can open but the captain of salvation. And, therefore, 3. You are to believe in him for *grace* to believe in him; or to come to him for grace to come to him, and to take on with him for faith, as well as for other things, because he alone is the author of faith. He never called any to bear the expence of one jot, from the beginning to the end of the war, out of their own pocket; and much less the expence of this great thing we call *believing*, which is the effect of the exceeding greatness of his Almighty power. And then, having believed these things, 4. You are to believe his *word*, that he will not fail you in a jot of what he is offering to you. Take his word for it, that he will do as he hath said unto you; and trust him that speaks to you by us. To take on with him by faith, is to take his word, who is *truth itself*, for security; and lay the stress of the whole war upon him, saying, *Lord, art thou calling me, even me, that have been a slave to the devil, and the nations of lust?*

thou calling me to take on with thee? Content Lord; Come thou and reign over us, as the trees said in Jonathan's parable, Judges xi. 10. Come thou and reign over me, and be thou my glorious captain, to fight for me, and to slay all nations of lusts in my heart. And, if you indeed take with him in this manner, he will do as he hath said; he will put out these nations before you by little and little. May the Lord back his call with power.

*Secondly*, To you that are believers, on the field of battle, making war with the nations, the spiritual Canaanites; and before whom the Lord hath begun to drive them out by little and little: I should offer you, 1. A word of comfort. 2. Of counsel.

*1st*, For comfort. O believer, though the nations be greater and mightier than you, yet the Lord hath engaged to drive them out; there is a power in Christ, the believer's head and husband, that will in process of time bring every power contrary to him in subjection; it is in Christ that believers shall be more than conquerors. It is very grievous to the believer to feel the assaults of sin, such as that of pride, filthiness, covetousness, unbelief, Atheism, and enmity: but it is the privilege of the believer, that he hath such things that he may be humbled, not that he may be conquered and destroyed thereby. You know, a snake may be so handled, by taking out his sting and teeth, that it cannot hurt us, though it touch us; yet we abhor it for the nature of it, and are afraid to have it come near to us: even so, sin is in such a manner handled by our Lord Jesus Christ, that it cannot hurt the believer in Christ. Hence the believer is many times more feared than hurt; yet it is very becoming the true believer to hate sin from the very nature of it, and stand at a distance from it. Mean time, you have the greatest encouragement in the world to fight against the nations of enemies, the nations of lusts; for the battle is the Lord's, he stands engaged to put out the nations, Deut. vii. 17, 18. Were there any uncertainty of the victory, you might be discouraged, and loth to undertake such a warfare; but now, when the Lord hath assured you of the victory, and that you have his blood, his Spirit, his faithful promise for it, there is no more ground of discouragement.

*Objection*.—O what comfort can I take, when I find the nations of enemies and lust still living and lively; yea, strong, mighty, and prevalent, and even growing stronger and stronger upon my hand, instead of being subdued and destroyed?

*Answer*.—Perhaps it is so between battles, or signal combats that you have with your corruptions; but, do you not find

find also your captain coming sometimes in to your assistance, and making up all that you lost, by his gracious, powerful, sanctifying, and comforting presence? And thus, do you not find even, after sin's victory over you, which makes you judge the nations are encreasing on your head; do you not find, I say, your hatred of sin encreased, your self-abbhorrence encreased, your dependence on the Lord for strength encreased, your desire to be rid of sin encreased, and your heart longing for the final victory over the nations, and the full possession of Canaan? Why, what is this but the Lord your God putting out the nations before you by little and little! Mean time, during these battles, is it not ground of comfort, 1. That there is a sentence passed in your favours against the nations, even a sentence of condemnation and destruction! and accordingly *sin is condemned in the flesh*, Rom. viii. 3. and Satan is condemned to destruction; *The God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet*. 2. Is it not ground of comfort, that the sentence passed against sin and Satan is executed in part? Your old man is crucified, the head of the serpent is bruised; *For this cause was the Son of God manifested, to destroy the works of the devil*; and, *by death he hath destroyed him that had the power death*. 3. Is it not ground of comfort, that the day of full and final execution is at hand, wherein he will take vengeance on the nations! *For the day of vengeance is in mine heart*, Isa. lxiii. 4. *the year of my redeemed is come*; *the day of the Lord is at hand*, wherein he will bring forth judgment unto victory, and death shall be swallowed up in victory; Christ will reign till all his enemies become his footstool; *to him every knee shall bow*. 4. Is it not ground of comfort, that the remaining power of the nations, in the interim, shall never be able to break the relation that is betwixt your captain general and you, nor to cast you out of his covenant, out of his heart, nor out of his love! *My covenant will I not break*, says he, *my loving kindness will I not take away*, Psal. lxxxix. 33, 34. He is still *the Lord thy God*; and, therefore, he will put out the nations before thee by little and little. I offer you,

2dly. A word of counsel. O! believer, are you indeed engaged in battle against the nations; and has the Lord begun to drive them out before you! Then pursue thy victory, and fight out the good fight of faith, for the Lord thy God is he that does fight for thee; as the apostle says in a like case, Phil. ii. 12, 13. *Work out the work of your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*; even to fight out the battle against



the nations, for the Lord thy God will put them out before thee by little and little. And, since the battle is the Lord's, and your captain goes before you to divide the spoil with the strong, go on courageously; and, that you may do so the more successfully, I shall branch forth this word of counsel in these few particulars:

1. *Put on the whole armour of God*; and go not forth against the nations in your own strength otherwise you will find them too many for you: but, *Go on the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, and his only being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; having no confidence in the flesh, but always your confidence in, and dependence upon the Lord Jesus Christ, the captain of your salvation.*

2. *Search out these nations that are most invisible and hidden*; for your greatest danger is from your most secret enemies. You *wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickednesses*. And there are spiritual lusts not easily discovered: If these be neglected, and more open enemies only noticed, it is as if one should gaze upon the smoke, and neglect the fire that is within; or as if one should gaze upon the ulcer, but never consider the corrupt humour within.

3. *Having found out the enemy, and discerned wherein their strength of the nations lies, then set upon them, and endeavour, through grace, to bring them into a consumption, and that both by starving and storming of them.* 1. *By starving them.* O starve them, and keep them from their food; "Make no provision for the lusts thereof." Beware of every thing that may contribute to strengthen the nations. *Say not, a confederacy with them; do not spare them, nor let their strongholds stand; draw not up a league with them, nor border too near to them.* It is said of Israel, *The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.* Keep not company with the wicked; be not too conversant with the world, many bury themselves, by digging too deep there.

2. *As by starving, so by storming the nations.* You are to consume them; and you ought to storm them, by bringing them under the battering engines of the gospel: under the stroke of God's word, which is *the sword of the spirit*; under the stroke of the blood of Christ, for we *overcome by the blood of the Lamb*; and under the stroke of the Spirit of Christ, for *if you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.*

4. Take all the *advantages* you can against the nations. Take advantage of the times and seasons; even when you are like to be overpowered with inward corruption, and under fear of falling one day by the hand of some strong lust, then get to the mighty power of Christ, and reinforce yourself, and resist; and, in resisting, believe you shall overcome: remembering, for your encouragement, that the Almighty Captain stands within sight, when you are fighting in the valley; and he waits but a call from you, when distressed in the battle; and he will come for your rescue. Jehoshaphat cried in the midst of the battle, and was helped; how much more may ye expect his aid in your spiritual combat!

5. Watch against the nations, and *resist* the first onset of the enemy. Corruptions are the natives, and they are not wholly destroyed: if, therefore, you do not watch, nature will turn to her old bias. Native and natural inclinations are very forcible: as, bend the bough of a tree downward, if you let it go, it will start up by and by: so, if you give up your watch, the nations will return, and resume their power. Particularly, watch against, and resist the first motions of sin: if you stop not the current of a wicked motion, it will soon land in a wicked action; for, *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin*. [James 1:15.] Great evils arise from small beginnings: one spoonful of water will quench that fire, which afterwards whole households cannot abate; therefore it is a good rule, *Principiis obsta*, resist the beginnings of sin.

6. Put the nations in the *hand of the captain*, that he may destroy them: and endeavour so to do, in the daily exercise of faith and prayer. O how seek to the Lord Jesus, that he would avenge you of these Philistines; as in the parable of the unjust judge, Luke 18. beginning. The parable was put forth for this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint. The judge here mentioned was one that feared not God, nor regarded man: a widow comes to him, saying, *Avenge me of mine adversary*; and through her importunity she prevailed with him: and shall not God avenge his elect, that cry day and night to him? though he bear long, yet he will avenge them speedily: therefore go to God in Christ, and cry, Lord, avenge me of my lust, avenge me of my pride, avenge me of my unbelief, avenge me of my carnality, avenge me of mine enemies.

7. After all, rest not *satisfied* with any *small* victory obtained over the nations: sit not down, as if you had no more to do; for the nations are not all dead and destroyed at once;

you

you will have them to fight with as long as you are on this side of heaven; enemies will up again, and therefore you must up again, and press forward to a compleat victory. As the body of sin and death remains while you are here, so, whatever particular lust you have been troubled with, you cannot expect a full and final victory over it while here, even though it hath been a mortified lust, a subdued lust. No doubt Peter got his feet upon the neck of his sin of *denying his master*, when he *went out and wept bitterly*, after Christ looked to him; yet even that same corruption afterwards did stir in him, by a partial denying of his master, though not in the same degree; as when *Paul withstood him to the face*, Gal. ii. 12. a particular corruption may through grace be subdued, and it may cease to stir so violently for a time, yet you cannot say that it is wholly killed; yea, it may afterwards rise up as violently as ever: a lust, that lay long dead, may revive again; and therefore you little need to be secure, but much need to be sober and watchful, and still going on in the warfare, still depending on the Lord, for new supplies of strength against new assaults. After one victory obtained, make ready for battle immediately; when something is done, look to the Lord to do more: after one stroke, seek another to be given; for it is by little and little the victory is obtained. Think not strange, therefore, though the nations rally their forces again and again, and be not discouraged thereupon; but learn a daily momentary, close and constant dependence upon the captain of salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ, that *through him you may do valiantly*. *It is he that girdeth you with strength, and subdues the nations under you*.

8. In order to pursue the nations to death, pursue the *claim* you have to the victory over them, to the use of all *appointed means*; with an entire dependence upon the Lord; not depending upon means; nay, nor yet depending upon sensible manifestations, not relying even upon the graces of the Spirit; but upon the God of all grace; pleading your right and claim, by virtue of the divine promise, saying, "Lord, hast thou not interposed thy faithfulness, thy word, thy oath! and is not thy promise sealed, sealed by the blood of Christ, sealed in the sacrament of the supper! Hast thou not said, *Solomon shall reign*; tho' now *behold, Adonijah usurps the throne*! Hast thou not said, *Grace shall reign, and sin shall not have the dominion*! Behold how it usurps" Well, put him to his word, and pursue your claim. Surely the Lord will not deny himself; nay, **JEHOVAH JIREH, In the mount of the Lord**



Lord it shall be seen: though you have no strength, no might against this great multitude; yet let your eyes be towards him, who is mightier than the noise of many waters, and who hath wrapt in your interest with his own glory; his own faithfulness and truth. Let your difficulties be never so great, your enemies never so many, and their power never so invincible; it is not you they have to do with, but Christ: and, can any thing be too hard for him? Wait on thy God continually, who hath here promised to accomplish the warfare gradually. *The Lord thy God will put out these nations before thee by little and little.*

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